



STUDI E TESTI TARDOANTICI
PROFANE AND CHRISTIAN CULTURE
IN LATE ANTIQUITY

16

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IN LATE ANTIQVITY

Ovid in Late Antiquity

edited by
Franca Èla CONSOLINO



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Cover picture:

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D/2018/0095/295

ISBN 978-2-503-57808-8

e-ISBN 978-2-503-57809-5

DOI 10.1484/M.STTA-EB.5.114325

Printed on acid-free paper

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FRANCA ELA CONSOLINO

INTRODUCTION

2017 is the 2000th anniversary of Ovid's death, and *Ovid in Late Antiquity* aims to mark the occasion. This book embodies a specific approach to Ovid's oeuvre, which is not analysed in and of itself, but rather in its role as a wellspring of inspiration to which later authors would return time and again. Covering the work of a number of authors, who found their way back to Ovid via different methodological pathways, the research distilled in this book is geared towards exploring the ways in which the authors of late antiquity interacted with the poet of the *Metamorphoses* and with his immense, multifaceted output. The choice of this approach arose out of an awareness that the presence and influence of Ovid in late antiquity constitute aspects of the Ovidian legacy that would benefit from more in-depth exploration. The essays in this collection are intended to help bridge this gap.

Franz Dolveck's opening essay compiles and investigates all the direct references made to Ovid between the third and seventh centuries, thus far neglected by other Ovidian studies, which have focused on the reception given to Ovid in the first two centuries and his Mediaeval presence and reputation from the Carolingian era onwards. Dolveck's essay is followed by other contributions, presented in the chronological order of the authors studied: from those who lived in the late Roman period, who occupy the first part of the book, to those active in the Roman-barbarian kingdoms. Serving as a link between the two periods are the essays by Jesús Hernández Lobato, Luciana Furbetta and Michael Roberts, which have a diachronic slant and take

into consideration the influence of Ovid on several successive Latin authors.

The writers of the essays included here have concerned themselves almost exclusively with poetry – the one important exception being Philip Polcar, who sifts through the Ovidian references in Jerome already highlighted by previous academics, excluding some of them while flagging up other possible echoes. The picture that emerges from it validates the image of Jerome being not unfamiliar with Ovidian readings, even if these are never explicitly declared and are, for the most part, isolated reworkings of single references rather than specific allusions to the contexts from which they come. A man of the cloth in thrall to the classics, Jerome may have had excellent reasons not to devote much space to a poet such as Ovid, especially in light of the subject matter of a great deal of his output. In any case, the relative marginality of Ovid is in clear contrast with the position accorded to Virgil by Jerome, who had studied at the school of Aelius Donatus.

Yet Jerome was not unusual in his silence about Ovid. In terms of testaments to his work, collected and discussed in Dolveck's essay, the relative scarcity of passages referring to Ovid (seventeen in all, sixteen of which mention his name explicitly) demonstrates how, although Ovid was widely – and often deeply – known, relatively little direct reference was made to him in late antiquity. This state of affairs is all the more striking if we consider how much was written about Virgil in the same period.

The analyses conducted on the texts themselves also throw up some surprises. Ovid's presence in late antiquity turns out to have been as pervasive as it was, to a certain extent, elusive, often entrusted, on the one side, to the assimilation of narrative motifs and schemes not necessarily supported by lexical references, and on the other to the often isolated recycling of terms and connections that, with various degrees of certainty, can be traced back to an Ovidian hypotext.

Benjamin Goldlust asks why, in late antiquity, Ovid occupied a considerably less pre-eminent position (at least as far as we know at present) compared to that which he enjoyed in the Middle Ages, and decidedly less central than that occupied by Virgil. The French academic identifies one possible explanation

in the education system: Ovid was not part of the *quadriga*. Ovid's particular status in late antiquity may also have depended on the array of genres he covered: elegy, didactic poetry and epic in the widest sense – that of the *Metamorphoses*, which differs from the traditional epos. The lack of a strong identification with a specific genre (Virgil being a byword for the epic) may have been instrumental in the way that the reworkings of his oeuvre in late antiquity were one-offs and variable rather than they were structural and systematic. Precisely because it was constituted by poems by different authors, the collection of the *Appendix Maximiani* illustrates very clearly the role played both by the scholastic context and by the literary genre. In the first two *carmina*, Ovid's presence is felt strongly, but the author's personal touch is missing; Virgil dominates the third, from which Ovid is absent; and in *Appendix* 4, Ovid's memory is given very short shrift. In *carm.* 5, Ovid is present, but he serves an exclusively ornamental function, whereas in *carm.* 6 he is nowhere to be found. In conclusion, the *Appendix Maximiani* does not include a return to the epic Ovid, whereas the elegiac Ovid does reappear in the first two *carmina*. In none of the *carmina* is he recontextualised or adapted to an original poetic project, as does happen with Virgil and other epic poets, and this may also be due to the limited skills of the authors, who for this very reason are more exposed to the influence of the scholastic tradition.

The conditioning of the education system certainly proved less pivotal for more gifted poets with a more distinct personality. The three essays on the influence of Ovid on Claudian exemplify rather well the co-existence in a single author of different modes of reception. Cecilia Pavarani shows how the memory of the *Metamorphoses* can be discerned in a series of Claudian passages on the theme of change: the images of the death and damnation of Rufinus; the evocation of the primordial chaos and the flood, associated with the threat to the security of the empire posed by Eugenius, Maximus and Gildo; and the vivid figurative details that, in the *carmina minora*, encapsulate the constant mutation of nature. For his part, Angelo Luceri, focuses on two *carmina minora*, 9 (*Hystrix*) and 28 (*Nilus*). His nuanced, painstaking analysis pinpoints a resonant network of specific correspondences with Ovidian passages belonging to different poems and contexts,

which Claudian adapts to his own subject matter, exhibiting great familiarity with Ovid's work.

Jean-Louis Charlet's essay on an episode of Claudian's Latin *Gigantomachia* (*carm. min.* 53. 91-113) deals with the case – an extreme one at that, in terms of its paradox nature – of a metamorphosis described in the manner of Ovid, infused with a *color Ovidianus* achieved almost without any specific verbal references. The giants' rebellion is described by Ovid in just a few verses (*met.* I. 151-162), whereas in Claudian it becomes a longer, more detailed narration. Although the only nexus with Ovid is the traditional mention of Mount Ossa, in the Claudian version there is a passage, original in its unfolding, which is shot through with Ovidian reminiscences. It is the episode of the three giants turned to stone by the Gorgon of Athena/Minerva. Claudian describes the process of petrification of the giant Pallas, who is powerless to stop his own gradual transformation. While in lexical terms there are no incontrovertible rewritings of Ovid, the stylistic features of the narration (such as the use of *iam* and *vix* to demonstrate the rapidity of the change), certain expressive traits (such as the use of an *-sco* verb ending for the process of metamorphosis), and the application to Pallas of the law of retribution (present in various episodes of the *Metamorphoses*), confer an unmistakably Ovidian complexion upon the giant's transfiguration.

The three essays on Ausonius provide evidence of his versatility and make the reader face up to the problematic richness of an intertextual relationship that is not always there to be seen at first glance. Ovid is mentioned only once by Ausonius, in one of the erotically and mythologically-themed epigrams (*epigr.* 72. 8) examined by Silvia Mattiacci. However, Mattiacci's penetrating and meticulous analysis, convincingly shows how Ausonius returns to elegiac ideas and metamorphic myths with erotic, sexual underpinnings, adapting them to the dimension of the epigram. Being acquainted with, and recognising, the Ovidian models is, then, an important requirement for gleaning a full understanding of the operation carried out by the Bordeaux-born poet.

The case of the *Cupido cruciatus*, of which I analyse the two catalogues, is rather different. The first catalogue is that of the flowers, all derived from a metamorphosis, whereas the second

is that of the heroines, already found either in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, or in Ovid's oeuvre (specifically in *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses*), or in both. Ausonius sets in motion a subtle game involving two hypotexts: one declared (Virgil) and another merely implied but nevertheless evident (Ovid). However, in lexical terms, there are relatively few Ovidian echoes, and they are often associated with the return to a single term, in contrast to the epigrams, where the engagement with the Ovidian hypotext is more apparent. In the *Cupido*, the relationship with Ovid is not, then, configured in terms of allusiveness, at least in the traditional sense of the term. Rather – as in, but to a greater extent than, other Latin works of late antiquity – the possible references to Ovid require the active involvement of the readers, who are able to pick up on them only if they have a well-honed poetic memory and literary sensibility; if they do, they are then rewarded with the pleasure of recognition.

The *Mosella* is considered by Jesús Hernández Lobato to be a poem on transformation, which perfectly epitomises the idea of change, transience and mutability, and expresses its symbolic and Neoplatonic values thanks to the complex and diversified intertextual relationship it has with certain passages of the *Metamorphoses*, which constitute its hypotext, albeit in the relative scarcity and dispersion of the instances of lexical call-and-response. Hernández Lobato juxtaposes the revisiting of the Ovidian poem by Ausonius in the *Mosella* with another type of recycling accomplished a century later by Fulgentius in his *Mythologiae*. This author, writing in Vandal Africa, not only takes for granted a familiarity with the Ovidian poem, but goes so far as to subject it to a systematic allegorisation with clear Neoplatonic overtones, as he also does with the *Aeneid* in his *Expositio Virgilianae continentiae*. The retooling of Ovid in a Christian, moralising key accentuates the Neoplatonic aspects already found in the reading by Ausonius, but paradoxically, 'some of the methods most characteristically used by Fulgentius to bring to the surface that "mystic truth" concealed by myths are typically Ovidian' (p. 259).

Whereas Ausonius mentions Ovid just once, Dracontius fails to namecheck him at all, even though he does make mention of Statius, Homer and Virgil. Annick Stoher-Monjou, who

explores his profane poetry, explains this silence with the paradoxical dimension of the influence that Ovid exerts on the *Romulea*: ubiquitous in the microcosm of the verses, he is repudiated by Dracontius in the macrocosm of the poems. The analysis of a series of Ovidian elements that embellish the text (accumulation and *contaminatio*, the *imitatio* of the Ovidian verse in its metrical scheme, the recourse to figures of style, the various different reworkings of the same Ovidian segment) shows how, in general, there is no correspondence of content with the model. Dracontius effectively returns to Ovid to imbue his work with aesthetic coherence, but he respects the metre and the Ovidian verses a good deal more than he does the themes that they address. In the *retractatio* of Ovidian themes, then, Dracontius deliberately diverges from the model, describing stories and characters in divergent ways (such as Medea and magic, depicted negatively with the help of Lucan, or Hercules riven by doubt as he squares up to the Lernaean hydra) or selecting episodes not specifically covered in the *Metamorphoses* (as is the case with the Trojan war) or breaking away from the *Heroides* and interacting with them (as is the case of Paris in *Romul.* 8). In all, Ovid is an ineluctable reference, with whom Dracontius must engage, albeit through *retractatio*, or parodic retouching, but even then, he rejects three important Ovidian aspects: metamorphosis, the nonchalance with which adultery is treated, and the fascination with magic. Stoehr-Monjou concludes her essay asking whether the complex attitude of Dracontius anticipates the fate of Ovid in the Middle Ages, when *Ovide moralisé* co-exists with *Ovidius ethicus*, the irreverent singer of pagan gods. We can respond in the affirmative to this question.

In contrast, Ovid is not renounced in the *Satisfactio*, analysed by Stefania Filosini. In this work, the presence of Ovid is manifested on various levels, starting with the metre employed – this is, indeed, the only poem that Dracontius wrote in elegiac couplets. Ovid in exile is a main reference point, providing the source for the idea that the more powerful one is, the more one is likely to set aside one's anger (*satisf.* 137-146 which is based on *trist.* III. 5. 31-34). It would, however, be reductive to limit the Ovidian influence to the elegies written in exile. The description of the dual metamorphoses of Nebuchadnezzar

(vv. 31-38) recycles for this biblical episode features that in Ovid characterise the story of Io (*her.* 14. 86, *met.* 1. 741-742; *fast.* v. 620). The long passage on the *concordia discors* (vv. 55-90) has as its privileged hypotext the passage in the *Metamorphoses* on the creation of the world, which Dracontius also returns to in the *Laudes Dei*. Despite the rarity of the explicit verbal echoes, the analogies with *trist.* II – evident in the way in which the poet places himself in relation to the sovereign – are dominant. Dracontius takes on two attitudes from Ovid: both that of the suppliant and that of the *didaskalos*, even if he imparts to his own king a lesson of political conduct and not, like Ovid, of literary history. And the way in which the lesson is imparted leaves space – as in *trist.* II – for the possibility of a reading that casts the prince in a negative light, implying the tyrannical nature of his power.

Sometimes it is the recurrence of an image or of a limited number of lexical elements that points the way towards a poetic memory bound up with one or more Ovidian episodes, which serve as guides – conscious and acknowledged to one extent or another – for the new stories in which they appear. This is made clear by the analyses of two poems with biblical subjects. Behind the account of the death of Judas in Arator, Roberto Mori identifies a trace of the episode of Daedalus and Icarus, which also contains a challenge to the divinity, the image of the body suspended between heaven and earth, and the motif of the final kiss. A similar but more complex case in terms of a potential referring back to various Ovidian episodes (as well as to Virgil, who is an obligatory reference for poetry with a biblical subject), is that of the anonymous short poem *de Sodoma*, dissected by Amy Oh. The treatment of the story of Lot, narrated in Gen. 19, is compared and contrasted with certain pieces from the *Metamorphoses* with which it has elements in common but from which it diverges in the telling of the tale. In this way, the episodes of Lycaon, Phaethon, Deucalion and Pyrrha are recalled, as is, last, the metamorphosis of Niobe. In particular, the stories of Pyrrha and Niobe help to characterise, by means of contrast, the personality of Lot's wife, to whom the anonymous author of the short poem devotes a level of attention unmatched by any other ancient text. Although clear-cut references are relatively thin on the ground,

the comparison with the Ovidian passages evoked highlights the specific features of the biblical tale and of the two protagonists, who are viewed both as individuals and as a couple.

An interesting position from which to study the presence and influence of Ovid in late antiquity is provided by the diachronic perspective, which was already an element in the essay by Hernandez Lobato on Ausonius and Fulgentius. Luciana Furbetta trains her spotlight on the reworkings of the *Metamorphoses* in Rutilius Claudius Namatianus, Sidonius Apollinaris and Alcimius Ecdicius Avitus, discussing the reworkings previously brought to light by others and making a number of new proposals. In the case of Rutilius, critics justly highlight the great influence of the Ovidian elegy of exile. The presence of the *Metamorphoses* is far more limited and harder to find, for the most part appearing in reworkings limited to and circumscribed by lexical elements concealed in the fabric of the text, though in certain cases it is tangible in lengthier recyclings of Ovidian passages, on occasion combined together. The analysis of Sidonius Apollinaris concerns both Avitus's panegyric and the elements reclaimed from Book II of the *Metamorphoses*, which are not limited to stylistic and lexical features, but actually influence the structure of Sidonius's text. In this latter case, in contrast to Rutilius, certain echoes and reworkings are mediated by other hypotexts, and serve a structural function. Similarly, in Avitus's biblical poem, the Ovidian revivals and the recycled passages from the *Metamorphoses* are often filtered through the intermediate literary tradition, both secular and Christian. However, despite their extensiveness and coherence, the Ovidian echoes generally perform an ornamental function, and do not seem to influence the structure of the passages in which they appear.

The expensive and nuanced essay by Michael Roberts examines the fate of the myth of Phaethon and tries to chart reverberations of the Ovidian narration of it. His analysis, which takes in a large number of authors (profane and Christian, prose writers and poets alike), ranges from the first to the sixth century CE, with a particular focus on those from the fourth and fifth centuries. The treatment of this myth is considered in terms of its political implications, from Claudian (*Hon. iv cons.* 62-69) to Sidonius Apollinaris (*carm.* 7. 410), where it is the sun that re-takes

control of the world; from Corippus (*Ioh.* I. 323-324 and 341-343) to Maximian's two eulogies in *Paneg.* 11. 3. 5 and *Paneg.* 7. 12. 3, where the way in which John Troglita and Maximian act actually refers back to the intervention of Jupiter. The Ovidian text, which insists on Phaethon's lightness as perceived by the horses, certainly underpins the use of the adjective *levis* at once in the translation of Aratus's *Phaenomena* by Avienus (cf. *Arat.* 786-787 *leve* [...] / *aetherii rectoris onus*), in the *de Sodoma* and in Sidonius (*carm.* 7. 405). In Sidonius, it is found in the context of a passage that, to be understood fully, presupposes a knowledge of Ovid's text. Even though the influence of Ovid's narration is not always equally strong and perceptible, on at least two occasions the Ovidian model is recognisable beyond any shadow of doubt: where the effects of Phaethon's fall are illustrated with reference to the passage in the *Metamorphoses* on the primordial chaos; and in the descriptions of fantastical architecture inspired by the palace of the sun in *met.* II. This latter theme is especially interesting, because it links back up with the taste for *ekphrasis* and for the precious detail that was a feature of late antiquity, as Roberts himself made clear in his work, *The Jeweled Style*. As such, it is no surprise that the many passages compiled and examined demonstrate how, in the hands of the authors of late antiquity, the Ovidian retelling of the myth of Phaethon served as a the model not only for the part relating to his disastrous career. Furthermore, in a period such as late antiquity, when there was a particular sensitivity towards displays of the splendour associated with power and towards portraying the sovereign on the throne, the description of the palace of the sun may well have provided numerous significant cues.

One aspect of Ovid's presence in late antiquity that should not be overlooked is the way in which (and the extent to which) the Ovidian interpretation of the metrical forms influenced the poets who came in his wake. Lucio Ceccarelli probes the impact of Ovid on the elegiac couplets of Venantius Fortunatus, who was in all likelihood the late Roman poet in whom the Ovidian influence was at its most pronounced. The essayist thus endeavours to discern in Venantius's couplet the presence and extent of the most typical features of the Ovidian couplet, such as the increase in the average frequency of dactyls, the increase in

the number of dactyls in the first position, the bisyllabic clause of the pentameter, the tendency to avoid synalepha, and so forth. The analysis of Venantius's couplet, illustrated by tables that make it possible to evaluate comparatively the frequency of the individual traits under examination, shows how the later poet took Ovid as his model without, however, reducing his own input to servile imitation. He preferred instead to introduce personal variations, which led him to reinforce certain features of the Ovidian couplet (such as the caesura after the fourth trochee or the frequency of bucolic dieresis), and to soften others (such as the exclusion of verses without caesura after the third foot), and even to neglect some (such as the limitation of the iambic words at the end of the first hemistich of the pentameter). Ovid is thus confirmed once again as a dominant model, but not one that was compulsory.

This is, then, a summary of the essays collected in this volume, which makes no claim to being comprehensive, but which in my opinion provides a number of interesting results and lays the groundwork for future explorations. The most striking result is the quality of Ovid's presence, a presence that is characterised by the elusiveness of many references. Other investigations, broadened out to take in other texts and other authors, may clarify the nature and limits of this phenomenon. It is, however, clear even now how the categories of allusiveness, as understood in the traditional sense, and of *aemulatio* are not always adequate for defining the type of relationship that the various authors establish with Ovid's text. In many cases, knowledge and acknowledgement of Ovid's work do not serve so much to imbue with additional sense the texts that echo him as they do to actively involve the knowledgeable reader, who is urged to be cognisant of Ovid as a precedent. Last but not least, the analysis of the Ovidian presences in the different authors tells us a lot about them and about their compositional technique. The hope, then, is that this book is just the start of more wide-ranging research, which will make it possible to shed more light on Ovid's place in late antiquity and on the different methods through which various authors engage with him in relationships that envisage the active participation of the reader.

FRANZ DOLVECK

QUE DIT-ON (OU NE DIT-ON PAS) D'OVIDE DANS L'ANTIQUITÉ TARDIVE ?

La réception d'Ovide, spécialement dans l'Antiquité tardive, a déjà été étudiée selon plusieurs approches ; celle que je propose ici se voudrait complémentaire de travaux plus vastes ou plus spécialisés dont les intérêts et les arguments sont principalement de nature littéraire. Elle s'intéresse non à l'inspiration poétique ou même intellectuelle que les auteurs tardo-antiques trouvent chez Ovide, mais à la connaissance qu'ils ont de lui et à l'usage qu'ils en font.

Il se trouve en effet que ce que nous savons d'Ovide est issu presque exclusivement de son œuvre.¹ Or, si une telle affirmation est commune, elle a des implications assez lourdes : cet état de fait pourrait être la conséquence de la propension d'Ovide à parler de soi, ou en tout cas à parler à la première personne, se constituant ainsi *de suo* en autorité de sa propre biographie aux yeux de la postérité, ou bien la conséquence de l'inexistence (ou de la disparition) de sources externes. Si l'on compare une fois de plus Ovide à Virgile, force est de constater que le second s'arroge la quasi-totalité de l'intérêt de leur postérité : c'est Virgile qui est commenté et glosé en abondance, Virgile à qui Macrobe, par exemple, consacre un ouvrage entier, et pas le moins volumi-

* Ces pages ont été considérablement améliorées par les relectures et les suggestions de Marie-Claire Ferrière, de Romain Loriol et de Pierre Chambert-Protat : je les remercie de tout cœur.

¹ Par exemple White 2002, p. 1 – qui ne manque pas de rappeler les dangers inhérents à cette source : 'No formula has yet been found that graphs the relationship between the imaginative "I" who speaks in poems and the life experience of poets who write them'.

neux, Virgile dont on conserve des manuscrits tardo-antiques.² Heureux sommes-nous qu'Ovide soit prolixe : sans cela, nous ne saurions quasiment rien de lui, et ce *a priori* non parce que les sources ont été décimées mais parce qu'elles n'ont jamais existé, ou alors en très petit nombre.

Cela donne à la personne et à la poésie d'Ovide dans l'Antiquité (et, dans une moindre mesure, au Moyen Âge) un statut très particulier et quelque peu paradoxal. En effet, son legs à la poétique latine est considérable, au point qu'il n'y a pas d'intérêt à démontrer qu'un poète, antique ou médiéval, a connaissance de son œuvre ; ce sont surtout les silences, les traces que quelqu'un a échappé ou semble échapper à cette influence, qui doivent être compris.

La fortune de l'œuvre et celle de son artisan sont de fait dissociées : si la première n'est jamais ignorée, on peut dire que, une fois morts Sénèque, Quintilien, Martial puis Suétone, le poète, lui, n'est pratiquement plus mentionné. Les références proprement 'antiques' ne relèvent pas de cette étude pour des raisons chronologiques, mais leur mise à l'écart se justifie de soi dès lors qu'il est constaté que – dans ce qui nous est parvenu de la littérature latine – les mentions d'Ovide se tarissent au début du II^e siècle, et qu'il s'écoule au moins un siècle après Suétone avant que ne reparaisse le nom d'Ovide sous la plume de Tertullien.³ Cet hiatus

² Ce dernier point est, me semble-t-il, une preuve du 'monopole' culturel de Virgile, mais indirectement : bien entendu, il a existé (ou il n'y a pas lieu de douter qu'il a existé) une multitude de manuscrits tardo-antiques d'Ovide, même si le seul vestige que nous en ayons est le palimpseste Wolfenbüttel, HAB, 13. 11 Aug. 4^o, supposé italien de la deuxième moitié du V^e siècle (CLA 9, 1377 ; l'écriture supérieure, Augustin, Luxeuil, début du VIII^e siècle, est le numéro précédent). Si les Virgiles tardo-antiques ont été conservés en nombre relativement important, ce doit être en bonne partie (outre une part indubitable de hasard) parce que c'étaient souvent des volumes illustrés, d'une qualité esthétique d'exception : il n'existait pas ou peu, très probablement, de manuscrits ovidiens comparables à ce que sont le *Romanus* (Città del Vaticano, Bibl. Vat., Vat. lat. 3867) ou le *Vaticanus* (même fonds, 3225) de Virgile.

³ Suétone mentionne l'amitié d'Ovide et d'Hygin dans la notice consacrée à ce dernier (*Gramm.* 20). Le seul recensement des témoignages ovidiens semble être Stroth 1969, mais il est très lacunaire – celle que je viens de mentionner manque, par exemple. Je n'ai pas fait de recherches approfondies du côté des sources grecques, et mentionne simplement en passant les occurrences non médiévales que livre une recherche dans la base *Thesaurus linguae graecae* : une chez Jean le Lydien, *De mensibus* 4. 2, au sujet de Janus (assimilé au chaos, cf. *fast.* 1. 103), et une seconde chez Jean Malalas, 1. 3, signalant au sujet de

a de quoi intriguer, et suggère une transformation de la figure de l'auteur et de la réception de son œuvre, même s'il est délicat de proposer une explication vraiment convaincante des caractéristiques et des raisons de ce changement.

Dans l'espoir d'y parvenir néanmoins, l'objet de ces pages est de réunir le corpus des mentions d'Ovide dans l'Antiquité tardive et d'en proposer l'analyse, pour contribuer à combler *pro viribus* une relative lacune de la bibliographie, qui s'est attachée surtout à la réception immédiate d'Ovide (aux deux premiers siècles, disons) ou à sa fortune médiévale (à partir de la renaissance carolingienne), mais a renoncé à dresser un état des lieux systématique entre le III^e et le VII^e siècle.⁴

Par 'mention d'Ovide', j'entends toute référence à la personne ou à l'œuvre du poète, presque toujours accompagnée de son nom ; j'en exclus par conséquent, naturellement, les reprises littéraires, les parallèles textuels, mais également les citations de tel vers ou tel passage par les grammairiens, qui, par des formules du type *ut dicit Ovidius in N. libro Metamorphoseon*, ne font que citer leur source, et s'intéressent non à l'auteur mais au texte, pour des raisons qui n'ont rien ou très peu à voir avec la biographie ou l'histoire littéraire.⁵ Ce n'est que pour mémoire et pour l'exhaustivité que je signale d'emblée les occurrences qui, si elles en donnent l'un des noms, n'ont en pratique rien à voir avec le personnage d'Ovide : elles semblent avoir toutes leur source, au début du V^e siècle, chez celui que l'on appelle Sergius, auteur du *Commentarium de oratione et de octo partibus orationis*, qui, traitant de ce qu'il appelle l'*agnomen*, indique qu'il peut trouver

Phaéton qu'Ovide en a rapporté l'histoire (on retrouve le passage également dans les fragments de Jean d'Antioche).

⁴ L'expansion massive et récente de la bibliographie ovidienne décourage l'exhaustivité ; on verra particulièrement Dewar 2002 ; Gatti 2014, essentiel pour les témoignages de réception ovidienne *via* les commentaires et, plus généralement, la littérature 'secondaire' ; et enfin Fielding 2014, qui démontre la dette considérable qu'ont Rutilius Namatianus, Dracontius et Maximien envers Ovide, et constitue une lecture très stimulante. Ces trois contributions signalent la bibliographie antérieure, qui se limite à des mentions plus ou moins étendues dans des contributions dont l'objet principal n'est pas la réception tardo-antique d'Ovide.

⁵ Dans cette littérature, Priscien est de loin celui qui cite le plus Ovide. Naturellement, les occurrences 'de citation', à partir du moment où elles incluaient un commentaire ou un développement, ont été prises en compte.

son origine soit dans une ‘qualité’ (*ex virtute*), citant en exemple *Africanus* pour qui a remporté une victoire sur l’Afrique, soit dans un défaut (*ex vitio*) ; et pour ce cas il cite deux exemples, celui d’Ovide, *ut Naso, quod grandem nasum habuit, unde dicitur Ovidius Naso*, puis celui de P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura, indiquant d’ailleurs que ce dernier doit son surnom à la longueur de ses jambes, sans avoir donc connaissance de l’anecdote que rapporte Plutarque, *Cic.* 17.⁶

Le corpus ainsi constitué n’est pas très important : je compte, de Tertullien à Julien de Tolède, dix-sept passages relatifs à Ovide, tous sauf un donnant explicitement son nom, ou l’un de ses noms. Le classement, qui décide du plan ici suivi, va du plus précis au moins historique, c’est-à-dire des éléments de chronologie aux mentions relatives à l’œuvre plutôt qu’à la personne d’Ovide, en passant par les données biographiques.

1. En termes de chronologie, le premier à fournir des éléments aux biographes – en dehors d’Ovide lui-même – est Jérôme, qui, traduisant et complétant aux alentours de 380 la *Chronique* d’Eusèbe de Césarée, y introduit les mentions de la naissance et de la mort d’Ovide.⁷ Sa naissance est donnée pour la deuxième année de la 184^e olympiade : ⁸ *Ovidius Naso nascitur in Paelignis*, et sa mort pour la première de la 199^e olympiade : *Ovidius poeta in exilio diem obiit et iuxta oppidum Tomos sepelitur*. Mentionnons d’emblée que la première de ces entrées est reprise par Prosper dans son *Epitome* de la même chronique (mais, curieusement, pas la seconde).⁹ Pour ce qui est de la naissance d’Ovide, nous avons le témoignage du poète lui-même, *trist.* IV. 10. 3-6 :

⁶ Pour l’attribution, la datation et le texte même, voir désormais l’édition Stock 2005 ; la citation s’y trouve p. 45 (= 1221 A).

⁷ Hier. *Chron.* 158^d et 171^s (je cite selon Helm 1913-1926 ; voir aussi Brugnoli 1995, p. 38 et 47). La datation la plus récente et la plus précise de la *Chronique* est donnée par Jeanjean – Lançon 2004, pp. 19-26.

⁸ Du moins dans l’édition, qui suit en cela son seul manuscrit L ; les autres font passer à tort cette mention (la dernière de l’année) dans l’année suivante. Jérôme, à la suite d’Eusèbe, ne tient pas compte (par commodité sans doute) du fait que les olympiades ne commencent pas au 1^{er} janvier mais à l’été (Samuel 1972, p. 184, n. 2). L’organisation des notices au sein d’une même année ne semble pas chronologique : la mort de Cicéron (158^s, le 7 décembre 43) y précède la naissance d’Ovide.

⁹ Prosp. *Chron.* 332. Ou Jérôme ou Prosper sont probablement la source

Sulmo mihi patria est, gelidis uberrimus undis,
Milia qui novies distat ab Urbe decem.
Editus hic ego sum, nec non, ut tempora noris,
Cum cecidit fato consul uterque pari.

'Sulmone est mon pays, si riche d'ondes fraîches,
À quatre-vingt-dix milles de la Ville.
C'est là que je suis né ; ce fut l'année, sais-tu,
Qu'un même sort frappa les deux consuls.' ¹⁰

Il fait référence à la mort, à deux jours d'intervalle, d'Aulus Hirtius et de C. Vibius Pansa, à la bataille de Modène, en avril 43 AC, et donne également, quelques vers plus loin, le jour (le 20 mars, exactement comme son frère l'année précédente ; *trist.* iv. 10. 9-14). Il est impossible, à ce stade, de dire quelle source Jérôme utilise : elle peut être secondaire, mais il était tout à fait en mesure de déduire lui-même l'information du texte d'Ovide ; ce n'est cependant pas la solution la plus évidente, puisque, dans ce cas, il aurait peut-être mentionné Sulmone plutôt que les Pélignes, à cause de la proximité immédiate, même si Ovide parle un peu plus volontiers des seconds que de la première (dix occurrences contre six).

En revanche – on ne peut échapper à la lapalissade – quand Jérôme indique la mort d'Ovide, l'année de la mort de Tite Live et du triomphe de Germanicus 'sur les Parthes', ce n'est pas de l'œuvre du poète qu'il tire l'information. La première année de la 199^e olympiade, qui est la quatrième du principat de Tibère, correspond à 17 AD. Elle est correcte pour le seul élément daté par ailleurs, le triomphe, mentionné par Tacite, *Ann.* II. 41 : *C. Caelio L. Pomponio consulibus Germanicus Caesar a. d. VII. Kal. Iunias*

d'une glose (mais de quelle époque ?) que l'on trouve dans le *Commentum artis Donati* de Pompeius Maurus (GLK v, p. 303) : *Schesis onomaton est : habebant hanc consuetudinem antiqui, modo nemo facit hoc. Schesis onomaton est coacervatio nominum. (... Maiores nostri) faciebant versum, in quo versu non invenies nisi omnia nomina, ut 'Magna [sic pro Marsa] manus, Peligna cohors, Vestina virum vis'* (Enn. *Ann.* 229 Sk.). *Magna nomen est, manus nomen est, Peligna cohors Vestina virum vis, omnia ista nomina sunt ; nullam aliam partem orationis habes in istis. Hoc est schesis onomaton. [Peligna, id est de Peligno, unde fuit Ovidius.] Quodam habitu copulandi : hoc est enim totum. Quae est magna manus ? Peligna. Quae fuerat illa Peligna cohors ? Vestina. Iterationem sensus fecit multitudine nominum.*

¹⁰ Sauf mention contraire, les textes cités sont de consensus, et les traductions sont miennes.

triumphavit de Cheruscis Chattisque et Angrivariis quaeque aliae nationes usque ad Albim colunt ; c'est-à-dire le 26 mai 17.¹¹

L'origine de ces mentions hiéronymiennes a fait couler bien de l'encre, encore que tous les commentaires ne soient pas fondés sur des informations de première main.¹² On estime généralement qu'elles sont issues directement, comme toutes les autres mentions de poètes et plus généralement d'écrivains, du *De viris* presque entièrement perdu de Suétone ; disons-le d'emblée : c'est possible, et même probable, mais indémontrable. Si l'on compare, en effet, les reliquats assurés de Suétone avec ce que l'on trouve chez Jérôme, des discordances parfois importantes apparaissent ; par exemple, la confrontation des notices conservées du *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* aux entrées correspondantes de Jérôme révèle que si, dans la plupart des cas, les premières *peuvent* être la source des secondes (un seul cas est quasiment indubitable), il en existe au moins une pour laquelle Jérôme ne puise pas, ou pas seulement, dans Suétone.¹³ Pour les poètes, la question est plus compliquée : le livre de Suétone est perdu, sauf certaines vies transmises séparément (en lien avec les œuvres de chaque auteur). Une seule est certainement de Suétone, celle de Térence ; on admet en général que sont aussi de lui, parmi

¹¹ Que Jérôme se trompe sur les vaincus n'est pas très important pour ce qui nous intéresse ; du reste, l'erreur ressortit en fait à Eusèbe, puisque l'on trouve cette notice (semblable) dans la version arménienne – la seule qui permette de contrôler ce que Jérôme conserve d'Eusèbe et ce qu'il y ajoute, l'original grec étant perdu. Voir Aucher 1818, pp. 262-263.

¹² Voire démontrent une méconnaissance inquiétante de la manière d'utiliser une édition critique, par exemple lorsqu'il est affirmé que nous avons conservé le sommaire du *De poetis* de Suétone (en fait une restauration, d'ailleurs controversée, de l'éd. Reifferscheid).

¹³ La table du *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* (probablement pas originale mais suffisante pour notre propos) contient 20 noms pour les grammairiens et 16 pour les rhéteurs, mais nous n'avons plus que les quatre premières notices de ces derniers (le texte s'interrompt dans le courant de la notice consacrée à Sex. Clodius). Sur les 24 personnes ainsi traitées par Suétone, 12 apparaissent chez Jérôme, dont 7 dont on a en fait perdu la vie suétonienne. Sur les 5 restant, 3 sont de simples *floruit*. La notice de Plotius Gallus chez Jérôme (150^f) cite exactement la même lettre (perdue) de Cicéron que Suétone (26) : si le premier n'est pas issu du second, ils ont alors une source commune. En revanche, dans sa notice de Q. Remmius Palaemon (180^f, voir aussi 180^e), Jérôme mentionne à son sujet une anecdote bien précise : *Palaemon Vicetinus insignis grammaticus Romae habetur, qui quondam interrogatus quid inter stillam et guttam interesset, 'gutta, inquit, stat, stilla cadit'*, qui ne se lit pas chez Suétone.

les vies antiques de poètes latins parvenues jusqu'à nous, celles de Virgile, d'Horace et de Lucain (quitte à avoir été remaniées). Pour le reste, nous dépendons de fragments divers, dont il n'est du reste absolument pas sûr qu'ils soient réellement suétoniens. Que Jérôme ait utilisé Suétone est hors de doute : il le dit lui-même dans sa préface, et des points de rencontre entre les entrées de Jérôme et les vies authentiques ou très probablement authentiques sont manifestes ; mais rien ne prouve qu'il utilise uniquement Suétone, bien que, implicitement, ce soit l'opinion générale de la littérature secondaire.¹⁴

2. Les autres données, ou mentions, sur la biographie d'Ovide ne se trouvent que chez deux auteurs : celui de l'*Epitome de Caesaribus* et Sidoine Apollinaire. Ce dernier est l'auteur tar-do-antique le plus disert sur Ovide – il est vrai qu'il est d'une manière générale celui qui parle le plus volontiers de ses prédécesseurs. Commençons par la seule occurrence dans les œuvres en prose, reportant à plus tard la question si volontiers polémique de l'exil. L'*epist.* II. 10 est adressée, en 469, à son ami Hespérius, alors un jeune homme : elle est célèbre parce qu'elle contient l'inscription que Patiens, évêque de Lyon, avait demandée à Sidoine pour orner ce qui deviendra l'église cathédrale de Lyon.¹⁵ La fin est occupée par une exhortation à ce qu'Hespérius ne délaisse pas les lettres à cause de son prochain mariage, ou ne se plaigne pas que cela risque de l'en détourner ; à fin d'argumentation, Sidoine cite d'abord, au paragraphe 5, des exemples de femmes ayant assisté leur mari dans leur travail, Marcia épouse d'Hortensius, Terentia de Cicéron, Calpurnia de Pline, Aemilia Pudentilla d'Apulée, Rusticiana de Symmaque. Selon les mots

¹⁴ Dans certains cas, cela conduit à élaborer des raisonnements extrêmement complexes, que l'exemple de Catulle illustre bien : Wiseman 1985. Du reste, il n'est guère de dates hiéronymiennes concernant les écrivains qui ne soient assurément ou probablement 'fausses' : il me semble que la masse de ces 'fautes' invite plus à suggérer une autre source que Suétone (peut-être une sorte de bréviaire ou de chronique ?), plus commode à consulter, qu'à supposer que Jérôme se trompe presque systématiquement dans ses datations. L'édition Rostagni 1964 est commode, parce qu'elle juxtapose toutes les sources, Jérôme, vies complètes, fragments divers ; mais son annotation est à manier avec la plus grande prudence, et l'origine de ses textes est mystérieuse.

¹⁵ Je reprends la date à Reynaud 1998, qui expose les données concrètes du texte pp. 44-45.

de Sidoine, *legentibus meditantibusque candelas et candelabra tenuerunt*, ‘c’étaient elles qui leur tendaient chandelles et chandeliers quand ils lisaient et étudiaient’. Toutes ne nous sont pas forcément bien connues, mais, dans les cas où d’autres sources sont disponibles, ces dernières confirment un intérêt réel de ces femmes pour l’œuvre de leur mari : il n’y a pas particulièrement lieu de douter que Sidoine fait plus qu’aligner des noms de couples célèbres. Le paragraphe 6, le dernier, est celui qui nous intéresse le plus : ¹⁶

Certe si praeter rem oratoriam conturbatio feminarum poeticum ingenium et oris tui limam frequentium studiorum cotibus expolitam quereris obtundi, reminiscere quod saepe verum Corinna cum suo Nasone complevit, Lesbia cum Catullo, Caesennia cum Gaetulico, Argentaria cum Lucano, Cynthia cum Propertio, Delia cum Tibullo. Proinde liquido claret studentibus discendi per nuptias occasionem tribui, desidibus excusationem. Igitur incumbe, neque apud te litterariam curam turba depretiet imperitorum, quia natura comparatum est ut in omnibus artis hoc sit scientiae pretiosior pompa quo rarior. Vale.

‘Assurément, si (laissons là l’art de la prose) tu te plains que de vivre avec les femmes émousse tes talents de poète et la lime de ta langue, bien aiguisée par les fusils d’exercices réguliers, rappelle-toi que, souvent, c’est Corinne qui termina un vers de son Ovide, Lesbie de Catulle, Caesennia de Gaetulicus, Argentaria de Lucain, Cynthia de Properce, Délie de Tibulle. Aussi apparaît-il clairement que le mariage fournit aux consciencieux une occasion d’apprendre, aux paresseux une excuse pour ne pas le faire. Au travail, donc : et que la masse des incultes ne te fasse pas juger mal du prix qu’a le soin des lettres, parce que la nature a fait une loi de ce que, dans tous les arts, le prestige du savoir ait plus de prix du fait qu’il est plus rare. Salut.’

Les femmes que cite là Sidoine ne sont en rien de simples sources d’inspiration de poètes satisfaits de les contempler languissantes,

¹⁶ Je suis normalement, pour Sidoine, l’édition Lütjohann ; mais, dans ce cas précis, je réintroduis avec Loyen *rem* avant *oratoriam*, leçon de tous les manuscrits sauf L (ainsi qu’N avant correction), suivi parfois aveuglément par Lütjohann et Mohr, ici manifestement à tort.

mais de véritables compagnes de travail – bien dignes de succéder à Égérie, finalement – tout à fait à même de souffler aux poètes l'hémistiche qu'il leur manque. Peu importe, là aussi, que ce soit vrai ou faux : l'essentiel est que Sidoine le croie, et non seulement le croie, mais encore estime pouvoir s'en servir comme exemples ; il ne l'aurait certainement pas fait, sinon à contre-emploi, si Hespérius avait pensé autrement que lui. Du reste, est-il seulement légitime de vraiment mettre en doute la pertinence historique de ce qu'il rapporte ici ? Il est hautement invraisemblable que Sidoine tire le nom de Caesennia (peut-être déformé, mais peu importe ici), femme de Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Gaetulicus (consul en 26, exécuté en 39), des sources qui nous sont accessibles : ¹⁷ il doit se fonder sur autre chose, de plus développé, et qui semble fiable ; si l'on peut sur ce point vérifier ce qu'il rapporte, je ne vois pas particulièrement de raison de douter de ce qu'il dit ailleurs.

Sidoine parle à nouveau d'Ovide – comme la fois précédente et comme la prochaine, parmi une foule d'autres écrivains – lorsqu'il s'agit de dédicacer au préfet du prétoire Magnus Felix l'ensemble de ce que l'on appelle commodément les *Carmina minora*. Le *carmen* 9, en effet, se réduit (si l'on peut parler de réduction pour un poème de quasiment 350 vers, certes des hendécasyllabes) à dire tout ce que Felix ne trouvera pas dans ce recueil : ni géographie ou histoire, ni mythologie ou théologie, ni l'équivalent des grands auteurs, grecs ou latins, anciens ou modernes. Bien que passant sur les premiers nommés, illustrant plus volontiers les 'grands genres', le passage mérite d'être cité assez largement (*carm.* 9. 259-278) :

Non Gaetulicus hic tibi legetur,
Non Marsus, Pedo, Silius, Tibullus,
Non quod Sulpiciae iocus Thaliae
Scripsit blandiloquum suo Caleno,
Non Persi rigor aut lepos Properti,
Sed nec centimeter Terentianus.
Non Lucilius hic Lucretiusque est,

¹⁷ 'Caesennia' fait l'objet de la notice PIR² C177 (voir aussi A976), mais il faut en réalité surtout voir la notice de Gaetulicus, PIR² C1390, plus développée et plus claire.

Non Turnus, Memor, Ennius, Catullus,
 Stella et Septimius Petroniusque
 Aut mordax sine fine Martialis,
 Non qui tempore Caesaris secundi
 Aeterno incoluit Tomos reatu,
 Nec qui consimili deinde casu
 Ad vulgi tenuem strepentis auram
 Irati fuit histrionis exul,
 Non Pelusiaco satus Canopo
 Qui ferruginei toros mariti
 Et Musa canit inferos superna,
 Nec qui iam patribus fuere nostris
 Primo tempore maximi sodales...

'Tu ne liras ici Gaetulicus,
 Marsus, Pédon, Silius ou Tibulle,
 Ce que la Muse de Sulpicia
 Écrivit, jeu charmeur, à son Calène,
 Le roide Perse ou l'aimable Properce,
 Ou bien Terentianus aux cent mètres.
 Ici, ni Lucrèce ou Lucilius,
 Ni Turnus, Memor, Ennius, Catulle,
 Ni Stella, ni Septime, ni Pétrone,
 Ni Martial qui n'en finit de mordre,
 Ni celui qui, régner César le Jeune,
 Vécut à Tomes, jamais pardonné,
 Ni qui connut ensuite même sort,
 Sur le faible on-dit du vulgaire hurleur
 Exilé du fait d'un acteur fâché,
 Ni qui grandit à Canope, en Égypte,
 Chante l'hymen de l'époux ténébreux
 Et, de sa Muse altière, ceux d'en bas,
 Ni ceux qui de nos pères jadis furent
 Les plus grands compagnons dès leur jeunesse'
 (et il cite notamment un client du comte Boniface).

Ce qui marque dans cette liste n'est pas tant l'accumulation de noms, certains rares ou à peine connus, mais le fait que Sidoine évoque trois poètes (quatre en réalité avec le client de Boniface, que nous ne connaissons pas) de manière indirecte, supposant ainsi chez son destinataire la capacité de reconnaître les auteurs à travers ce qu'il en dit ; c'est donc que les exils d'Ovide et de Juvénal, ainsi que l'origine égyptienne de Clau-

dien et son *De raptu Proserpinae*, sont des choses parfaitement connues.¹⁸

La dernière mention d'Ovide chez Sidoine est la plus riche, si l'on veut, parce qu'elle touche au motif de l'exil. Le *Carm.* 23, adressé à Consentius entre 461 et 466,¹⁹ contient un éloge du père de ce dernier ; sous ce prétexte, Sidoine fait la liste de tous ceux qui sont inférieurs à un génie si grand. La liste des écrivains latins, où prosateurs et poètes se mêlent, nomme Cicéron, Tite Live, Virgile, Térence, Plaute, Varron, Salluste, Tacite, Pétrone, puis Ovide (vv. 158-161) :

Et te carmina per libidinosa
Notum, Naso tener, Tomosque missum,
Quondam Caesareae nimis puellae
Ficto nomine subditum Corinnae,

'Toi qui te signalas pour tes poèmes
Lascifs, tendre Nason, banni à Tomes,
Trop soumis à la fille de César
Autrefois, sous le faux nom de Corinne',

puis les deux Sénèque, Martial, et enfin Lucain et Stace.²⁰ Certes, Sidoine ne donne pas directement la cause de l'exil d'Ovide, mais le fait est qu'il en encadre la mention par deux éléments qui ne peuvent être vus comme l'énoncé de simples données indépendantes. Dire en effet qu'Ovide est 'connu' (*notum*) *carmina per libidinosa* est nécessairement inexact si pris tel quel : il faut sans doute donner à *notus* le sens de *notatus*, c'est-

¹⁸ Je ne m'explique pas comment Christiansen-Christiansen 2009, p. 137, n. 14, parviennent à voir dans les vv. 274-276 une allusion à Lucain et non à Claudien. Même en admettant que les vv. 275-276 puissent faire référence à Caton et à diverses scènes funèbres de la *Pharsale*, *Pelusiaco satus Canopo* ne saurait s'appliquer à un poète dont les origines espagnoles sont indubitables. Par ailleurs, je soupçonne le texte d'être corrompu ; en l'état actuel, il me semble que, par *inferos*, se seraient les Géants (et donc la Gigantomachie) qui sont désignés, mais j'y verrais plus volontiers un adjectif de *toros*, si *et* ne l'interdisait pas.

¹⁹ La datation est de Mommsen, dans sa préface à l'éd. Lütjohann, p. LI.

²⁰ Ces deux derniers sont évoqués en fait à travers la figure d'Argentaria, certainement femme de Lucain, et également de Stace, si l'on en croit Sidoine (vv. 165-166) : *Quid [canam] quos duplicibus iugata taedis / Argentaria pallidat poetas* ? La leçon *Argentaria Polla dat* (dont il serait intéressant de connaître l'origine exacte), adoptée par Loyen contre Lütjohann et Mohr, est une fausse bonne idée : Nisbet 1978, p. 7.

à-dire que, par ces poèmes, Ovide s'est attiré la *nota* du censeur. Car si l'on se contente du sens ordinaire, 'connu', il faut donner à *per* soit le sens de 'pour', et donc supposer qu'Ovide n'est plus lu du temps de Sidoine que pour les *carmina amatoria*, ou que du moins ces derniers éclipsent (pour ne citer que le plus massif) les *Métamorphoses* et les *Tristes* et *Pontiques* ; soit le sens de 'par', et alors supposer, ce qui est manifestement faux, que les éléments autobiographiques ovidiens sont à chercher ailleurs que dans la lettre fameuse qu'est *trist.* IV. 10, dont rien ne permet de supposer que Sidoine ne la connaît pas. C'est donc que Sidoine n'énonce pas un point d'histoire littéraire, ou d'histoire de la réception d'Ovide : il évoque en fait le motif de l'exil, c'est-à-dire la censure impériale. Cela s'accorde du reste parfaitement avec ce que rapporte l'*Epitome de Caesaribus*, texte anonyme, composé très vraisemblablement entre 395 et 408, au sujet d'Auguste (1. 24 ; éd. Festy, p. 5) :

Cumque esset luxuriae serviens, erat tamen eiusdem vitii severissimus ultor, more hominum qui in ulciscendis vitiis quibus ipsi vehementer indulgent acres sunt. Nam poetam Ovidium, qui et Naso, pro eo quod tres libellos Artis amatoriae conscripsit irrevocabili damnavit exilio.

'Et, tout zéléteur de la luxure qu'il était, il n'était pas moins le vengeur le plus sévère de ce même vice, à la manière de ces gens qui sont impitoyables à venger les vices auxquels ils s'adonnent eux-mêmes sans frein. Car, le poète Ovide, c'est-à-dire Nason, pour le prétexte qu'il écrivit les trois petits livres de l'*Art d'aimer*, il le condamna à un exil irrévocable.'

Il n'est pas sans intérêt que ces deux mentions de la cause de l'exil d'Ovide soient les deux seules de toute la littérature latine parvenues jusqu'à nous, hors l'œuvre du poète lui-même. Cependant, elles trouvent, directement ou non, leur source chez Ovide lui-même, qui y fait allusion tout le long des *Tristes* et des *Pontiques* : si nombreuses sont ces occurrences que je ne sais même si quelqu'un a un jour entrepris d'en dresser la liste. La première, en tout cas, est en *trist.* I. 1. 111-116, même si ce n'est pas la plus directe.²¹

²¹ Stover 2017, qui tient pour interpolé le passage *Artis – exilio*, parvient

Pourtant, Sidoine, contrairement à l'*Epitome*, ne s'en tient pas là, et les deux vers sur la *Caesarea puella* ont fait l'objet d'assez d'ouvrages pour remplir une bibliothèque – et je n'ai traduit 'la fille de César' que pour donner une traduction, sans m'avancer à interpréter le sens précis de cette formule. Il est à mes yeux indubitable que ces vers sont à lier à la mention de l'exil, contrairement à ce qui a pu être affirmé :²² quelqu'un comme Sidoine ne peut pas ne pas avoir connaissance (et une conscience aiguë) de l'insistance d'Ovide sur le double motif, les fameux *duo crimina, carmen et error* (*trist.* II. 207) ; par conséquent, il ne peut avoir ainsi rapproché de la mention des *Amores* l'identification de Corinne sans avoir présentes à l'esprit les implications de cela – en d'autres termes, sans savoir parfaitement ce qu'il faisait. Dans quelle mesure Sidoine est-il historiquement fiable ? Nous ne le saurons sans doute jamais. Dans quelle mesure est-il sincère ? De cela, en revanche, nous pouvons juger, ne serait-ce que par bon sens. Tout le monde sait que Corinne n'est pas Corinne, puisque Ovide le dit lui-même, *trist.* IV. 10. 59-60 :

Moverat ingenium totam cantata per Urbem
 Nomine non vero dicta Corinna mihi,
 'L'âme de mon génie, en tout Rome chantée,
 C'était Corinne – mais le nom est faux' ;

et, de même, je ne suis pas sûr qu'il y ait vraiment lieu de douter de son existence – ou du moins de l'existence d'une personne réelle, 'amante' d'Ovide au sens du Grand Siècle, qui inspira, à quelque degré que ce soit, la Corinne littéraire. Sidoine est aussi le premier à évoquer l'exil de Juvénal, dans le passage du *carm.* 9 cité plus haut : certes, le fait est discuté, mais rien de ce que l'on sait ne s'oppose à ce qu'il soit avéré.²³ Il va de soi que Sidoine ne se

à ma connaissance trop tard pour que je puisse en faire usage. Cela ne remet pas en cause mon propos : J. Stover lui-même admet que, dans tous les cas, c'est d'exil que parlait le passage avant qu'il ne soit perdu et que la lacune ne soit comblée au Moyen Âge.

²² Hexter 1986, pp. 89-90.

²³ Ce qui semble surtout faire douter les spécialistes n'est pas ce que dit Sidoine mais ce que dit Jean Malalas, qui, il est vrai, est plein d'erreurs factuelles lorsqu'il aborde le même sujet. Renoncer purement et simplement à étudier le cas, comme le fait Syme 1979, p. 14, est pour le moins cavalier. La contribution

contente pas d'inventer des *exempla* propres à fournir la matière de ses poèmes ; il se fonde sur des sources que nous n'avons plus, mais qu'il suppose (peut-être, il est vrai, sans esprit critique) fondées, et surtout que tout le monde connaît : ce dont il parle, qu'il s'agisse de l'exil de Juvénal ou de l'identité de Corinne, ce ne sont pas des choses susceptibles d'étonner son lecteur. Dès lors, écrire que Sidoine '[inventò] un pettegolezzo di dubbio gusto, e destinato pertanto a fare la gioia dei maligni per i secoli a venire'²⁴ en donnant l'identité de Corinne est méconnaître profondément et Sidoine et les réalités de la poétique classique. Peu nous importent ici les motifs réels de l'exil d'Ovide : Sidoine, comme tous ses contemporains, croit aux raisons qu'il évoque, et ne voit apparemment aucune raison de les remettre en cause.²⁵

3. À l'autre extrémité du spectre de ces occurrences viennent celles qui, en fait, traitent plus de l'œuvre que d'Ovide. Elles ont un certain intérêt pour notre propos en ce qu'elles confirment à leur manière qu'Ovide est parfaitement connu et pratiqué, et viennent donc à l'appui aussi bien de l'évidence 'littéraire' que constituent les innombrables reprises et imitations par les poètes que de l'évidence 'grammairienne'. Passons rapidement en revue les moins riches, dans l'ordre chronologique. Lactance, qui achève les *Institutions divines* (sauf ajouts et révisions) en 311,²⁶ fait un usage assez intensif d'Ovide, envers lequel il est notoirement bienveillant. Il ne commente que deux, parmi bien d'autres, des

la plus récente sur le dossier, et qui cite les sources, semble être Compton 2006, pp. 314-319.

²⁴ Pittaluga 2003, p. 336. J'en profite pour signaler que ces quatre vers de Sidoine, qu'imite Politien en *Nutricia* 438-439 (cité p. 335), sont copiés de sa main dans le manuscrit Firenze, BML, plut. 90 *sup.* 8, f° 169^v, sous le titre *Item* (parce qu'à la suite d'un autre extrait sur Hercule) de *Nasone* : petite trace matérielle d'une imitation du reste obvie.

²⁵ L'historicité de l'exil d'Ovide a été contestée en dernier lieu par Bérchez Castaño 2015 (*n. v.*). Sur les différents motifs invoqués, restent incontournables (au moins pour l'historiographie) Thibault 1964 et Goold 1983. La contribution la plus récente semble être White 2005. Il est curieux que l'on ait cherché des traces du *De poetis* de Suétone dans la *Chronique* de Jérôme mais pas chez Sidoine : ces deux histoires d'exil, par exemple, me semblent correspondre bien plus à ce que l'on attendrait de Suétone que des mentions de dates.

²⁶ Heck – Wlosok 2005-2011, t. I, p. VIII.

citations qu'il en fait. La première (I. 5. 13 ; éd. Heck-Wlosok, t. I, p. 17) intervient alors que Lactance disserte de la connaissance qu'ont ou n'ont pas philosophes et poètes du Dieu unique ; Orphée est le seul à trouver grâce à ses yeux chez les Grecs, mais il est plus favorable aux Latins, et en vient, après avoir naturellement cité Virgile, à Ovide :

Ovidius quoque in principio praeclari operis sine ulla nominis dissimulatione a Deo, quem 'fabricatorem mundi', quem 'rerum opificem' vocat, mundum fatetur instructum.

'Ovide aussi, au commencement de son admirable ouvrage, déclare, sans en dissimuler en rien le nom, que c'est par Dieu, qu'il appelle "le forgeur du monde", "l'ouvrier de l'univers", que le monde a été réalisé.'

L'autre occurrence (II. 5. 24 ; même éd., t. I, p. 134) est célèbre, parce que c'est aussi celle qui nous transmet l'un des rares fragments connus des *Phaenomena* traduits par Ovide (*carm. frg.* 2) :

Quanto igitur Naso prudentius quam illi qui sapientiae studere se putant, qui sensit a Deo lumina illa ut horrorem tenebrarum depellerent instituta ! Is eum librum quo Phaenomena breviter comprehendit his tribus versibus terminavit :

'Tot numero talique Deus simulacra figura
Imposuit caelo perque atras sparsa tenebras
Clara pruinosa iussit dare lumina nocti'.

'Qu'il était donc plus avisé, Nason, que ceux qui se prétendent sages de profession, lui qui perçut que ces luminaires ont été établis par Dieu pour chasser l'effroi des ténèbres ! Le petit livre où il traite des *Phénomènes*, il le termina des trois vers que voici :

"Tel fut le nombre, tel l'aspect des astérismes
Qu'au ciel Dieu mit, leur ordonnant, dans les ténèbres
Répartis, de donner lumière à la nuit noire".'

Ces mentions attestent que Lactance a une connaissance précise d'Ovide (et plus vaste que la nôtre : il lit les *Phaenomena* en entier), mais encore elles recommandent on ne peut plus chaleureusement Ovide aux générations à venir, qui seront chrétiennes ; et, en effet, à aucun moment on ne trouve trace, dans l'Antiquité

tardive comme au Moyen Âge, d'une quelconque volonté de censurer Ovide, y compris les œuvres – à nos yeux – les moins compatibles avec la morale chrétienne.²⁷ Il faut bien garder à l'esprit la bénédiction que donne ainsi Lactance : elle servira à pondérer, ci-après, des éléments qui pourraient à première vue s'interpréter dans le sens contraire.

S'il n'existe aucune censure de l'œuvre 'érotique' d'Ovide, cela n'implique pas que sa qualité ne soit pas reconnue ; ce n'est pas par hasard qu'il est cité avec Apicius et Martial pour former le corpus des lectures favorites de Vérus dans l'*Histoire auguste*. Le texte est corrompu, et rien ne garantit que ce que nous lisons soit original, mais le sens général demeure quelle que soit la version retenue pour ce qui nous intéresse, et la sélection d'auteurs doit sa raison d'être à des aspects manifestement sensuels (*Ael.* 5. 9) :²⁸

(Iam illa frequentantur a nonnullis...) atque idem Apicii Caelii relata, idem Ovidii libros Amorum in lecto semper habuisse, idem Martialem, epigrammaticum poetam, Vergilium suum dixisse.

'(Même, d'aucuns répètent) qu'il avait toujours à son chevet les *relata* d'Apicius et les *Amours* d'Ovide, et qu'il disait que Martial, le poète à épigrammes, était son Virgile.'

²⁷ Des remarques très justes à ce propos dans Hexter 1986, pp. 15-17 (en introduction aux commentaires médiévaux de l'*Ars*).

²⁸ Je cite le texte de l'édition Peter 1884², t. I, p. 33, sans conviction : il est aisé de voir que *relata* pose problème (la traduction de David Magie, pour Loeb, le révèle en plaquant sur *relata* 'recipies'). Aussi peu convaincante est la version de Callu 1992 (p. 61), qui édite *Apicii ab aliis relata <dicta>* et 'traduit' cela par 'la nouvelle édition des *Apiciana*' ; elle repose en bonne partie sur une conception datée des 'éditions' tardo-antiques (voir les n. 36 et 37, p. 143). Bien qu'elle soit assez éloignée du texte transmis, je me demande si l'on n'a pas mésestimé la conjecture de Klotz 1929, p. 313 (reportée en *addenda* dans Hohl 1990⁵, p. 306) : *Atque idem Ovidii libros Amorum ad verbum memoriter scisse fertur, idem Apicii, ut ab aliis relatum, in lecto semper habuisse, idem Martialem, epigrammaticum poetam, suum Vergilium dixisse*, 'Et il se dit qu'il savait par cœur, au mot près, les *Amours* d'Ovide, qu'il avait toujours (d'autres le rapportent) Apicius à son chevet, qu'il disait que Martial, le poète à épigrammes, était son Virgile'. En tout cas, sans avoir à condamner une partie du texte transmis, comme le font les éditeurs, cette conjecture offre pour le coup une syntaxe plausible et un sens excellent. Gutsfeld 2014, qui étudie ce passage pp. 267-269, en utilisant le texte de l'édition Hohl 1990⁵ (même tome et même page que dans l'édition Peter, avec le maintien d'*ab aliis* là où Peter conjecturerait *Caelii*) : il pense que ces *relata ab aliis* sont en fait des anecdotes sur Apicius (mais il renonce, et c'est dommage, à s'intéresser au texte, dont il mentionne juste, p. 267, n. 22, qu'il est 'défectueux').

C'est dans le même sens – celui de l'énoncé d'un fait plus que d'une condamnation – qu'il faut probablement lire l'*Epigramma Paulini*, attribuée de manière hypothétique mais consensuelle à un évêque d'Auch éponyme, écrivant vers la fin de la décennie 400 (vv. 74-77, éd. Schenkl, p. 506) :

Iam quod perpetuis discursibus omnia lustrant,
Quod pascunt, quod multa gerunt, quod multa loquuntur,
Non vitium nostrum est ? Paulo et Salomone relicto
Aut Maro cantatur Phoenissa aut Naso Corinna.

'Or si, courant toujours, elles vont en tous lieux,
Paissent, régissent et discutent bien des choses,
N'est-ce pas notre faute ? Adieu, Paul, Salomon :
Didon chante Virgile, ou Corinne Nason.'

Paulin réproche le rôle des femmes dans la vie active, et réproche qu'elles ne se consacrent pas à la lecture des auteurs sacrés ; mais je n'y vois pas particulièrement de rejet par principe de la poésie classique – à vrai dire, ce serait assez malvenu de la part de quelqu'un qui semble la connaître assez bien, assez en tout cas pour faire des vers qui ne sont pas sans mérites, même s'ils ne sont pas toujours très fidèles aux canons que respectent encore les plus grands parmi ses contemporains.

Je mentionne en passant, dans la même veine, les *Tituli bibliothecae*, qu'ils soient ou non d'Isidore, dont l'analyse révèle globalement le même jugement (mais les poètes chrétiens sont déjà parvenus au rang de classiques ; 11. 1-4, éd. Sanchez Martin, p. 223) :

Si Maro, si Flaccus, si Naso et Persius horret,
Lucanus si te Papiniusque taedet,
Pareat eximio dulcis Prudentius ore
Carminibus variis nobilis ille satis.

'Si Maron, Flaccus, Perse, Ovide tu redoutes,
Si de Stace et de Lucain tu t'ennuies,
Voici le doux Prudence, à la voix excellente ;
Ses chants multiples le font assez noble.'

Trois occurrences, enfin, ne sont ici citées que pour être complet, avant de passer à des cas, me semble-t-il, plus riches ; elles

témoignent du fait qu'Ovide reste connu, et vraisemblablement lu. Ce sont, dans l'ordre chronologique, Fulgence le Mythographe, Luxorius et Julien de Tolède. Que le premier d'entre eux ne parle jamais d'Ovide aurait surpris ; pourtant, il ne le fait explicitement que deux fois. L'occurrence qui nous intéresse n'est qu'une forme de prétérition, mais elle est on ne peut plus clair sur l'importance capitale d'Ovide (et de Lucain) dans le parcours scolaire de la fin du v^e ou du début du vi^e siècle (I. 21, éd. Helm, p. 32) :²⁹

Fabula Persei et Gorgonarum. – Perseum ferunt Medusae Gorgonae interfectorem. Gorgonas dici voluerunt tres, quarum prima Stenno, secunda Euriale, tertia Medusa ; quarum quia fabulam Lucanus et Ovidius scripserunt, poetae grammaticorum scholaribus rudimentis admodum celeberrimi, hanc fabulam referre superfluum duximus.

'Fable de Persée et des Gorgones. – On rapporte que c'est Persée qui tua la Gorgone Méduse. On veut qu'il y ait trois Gorgones, Stheno d'abord, puis Euryale, enfin Méduse ; puisque Lucain et Ovide ont écrit leur histoire, deux poètes plus que constitutifs des premières études des grammairiens, nous avons pensé qu'il était inutile de la rapporter.'

Celui qui est très probablement Luxorius, quant à lui, cite Ovide (et, notons-le, Ovide seul) comme figure idéale à laquelle il ne peut se comparer :³⁰

Antistat gerras meas anitas diributa, et post artitum Nasonem quasi agredula quibusdam lacunis baburum stridorem averruncandus obblatero.

²⁹ L'autre est pour introduire une citation, II. 7 (p. 47). Dans le passage qui nous intéresse, les références sont pour Lucain à IX. 629-684, et pour Ovide à *met.* IV. 765-803 (Wolff-Dain 2013, p. 23) ; il faut signaler qu'*Ovidius* est mal transmis : la leçon archétypale a l'air d'être *bidius* (RH) ou *biduus* (T), 'corrigé' secondairement dans la plupart des manuscrits en *Livius*.

³⁰ *AL* 19. 1-6 R² (= 6. 1-5 SB). Pour le texte et son histoire, voir Cristante 2005-2006 (j'émende pour la commodité du lecteur *pos en post* et ajoute la virgule après *diributa*) ; il traduit ainsi ce passage difficile : 'Va da sé che i poeti antichi che abbiamo assimilato sono superiori alle mie sciocchezze, e dopo il grande Nasone io emetto – da poeta detestabile qual sono – un gracidio privo di senso a guisa di una ranocchia in uno stagno'. Pour l'identification de l'auteur de ce texte à Luxorius, voir Mondin – Cristante 2010.

'L'antiquité dont nous sommes imbus l'emporte sur mes balivernes, et, à la suite de l'artistique Nason, je ne fais qu'émettre, conjurable, comme une rainette dans un étang, mon coassement bavard.'

Julien, enfin, dans la deuxième moitié du VII^e siècle, ne fait que le mentionner en passant, *ars* II. 17. 4 (éd. Maestre Yenes, p. 191) :

Dictio quae transformatione componitur graece metamorphoseos dicitur, sicut Ovidius scripsit libros quindecim vel Apuleius ; sed metaplasma in una parte orationis fit, metamorphoseos vero in omni serie librorum.

'La tournure qui consiste en une transformation s'appelle en grec métamorphose, comme les quinze livres qu'écrivit Ovide, ou comme Apulée ; mais le métaplasme porte sur une seule partie du discours, tandis que la métamorphose porte sur la totalité des livres.'

Passons maintenant à des occurrences de portée plus significative. La première en date se trouve sous la plume de Tertullien ; elle ouvre une série d'utilisations d'Ovide à des fins d'ironie. L'*Adversus Valentinianos*, écrit probablement vers 207-209,³¹ réfute les théories excessivement complexes des valentiniens ; si l'exposé qu'en fait Tertullien est honnête, on ne peut que reconnaître, comme il le dit lui-même, que la seule présentation du *credo* valentinien suffit à le discréditer. En 12. 1 (éd. Fredouille, t. I, pp. 106-108, dont j'emprunte la traduction), il donne les conséquences de l'émission des éons Christ et Saint-Esprit :

Itaque omnes et forma et scientia peraequantur, facti omnes quod unusquisque ; nemo aliud, quia alteri omnes. Refunduntur in Nus omnes, in Homines, in Philetos, aequae feminae in Sigas, in Zoas, in Ecclesias, in Fortunatas, ut Ovidius Metamorphosis suas delevisset, si hodie maiorem cognovisset.

'Ainsi tous (les éons) sont égaux en forme et en connaissance, étant tous devenus ce qu'est chacun d'entre eux ; aucun n'est autre chose, car tous sont autrui. Les voilà confondus : tous sont Nous, tous sont Homme, tous sont Philétus, de même pour les éons femelles, qui sont tous Sigè, tous Zoè,

³¹ Fredouille 1980-1981, t. I, pp. 7-12, part. pp. 10-11.

tous Église, tous Fortunata, tant et si bien qu'Ovide eût détruit ses *Métamorphoses* en en voyant aujourd'hui une plus grandiose !'

Il me semble assez probable que Jérôme ait en mémoire ce passage lorsqu'il écrit, en 396-397,³² l'*in Ionam* ; il y évoque en effet de la manière suivante les doutes que l'on pourrait avoir sur l'épisode de la baleine (2. 2-3, éd. Duval, pp. 224-224) :

Nec ignoro quosdam fore quibus incredibile videatur tribus diebus ac noctibus in utero ceti, in quo naufragia digerebantur, hominem potuisse servari. Qui utique aut fideles erunt aut infideles. Si fideles, multo credere maiora cogentur (...). Sin autem infideles erunt, legant quindecim libros Nasonis Μεταμορφώσεων, et omnem graecam latinamque historiam, ibique cernent vel Daphnen in laurum vel Phaethontis sorores in populos arbores fuisse conversas, quomodo Iupiter, eorum sublimissimus deus, sit mutatus in cycnum, in auro fluxerit, in tauro rapuerit, et cetera in quibus ipsa turpitudine fabularum divinitatis denegat sanctitatem.

'Et je ne suis pas sans savoir qu'il en est pour trouver incroyable qu'un homme puisse survivre trois jours et trois nuits dans le ventre d'une baleine, dévoreuse de naufrages. Ils seront soit des fidèles, soit des infidèles. S'ils sont des fidèles, ils sont tenus de croire des choses bien plus grosses (il cite les trois enfants dans la fournaise, la traversée de la mer Rouge, Daniel intouché des lions). Que s'ils sont infidèles, qu'ils lisent donc les quinze livres des *Métamorphoses* d'Ovide, et la totalité de l'histoire grecque et latine ; ils y verront que Daphné fut changée en laurier, les sœurs de Phaéton en peupliers, y verront comment Jupiter, le plus élevé de leurs dieux, se changea en cygne, se fit pluie d'or, taureau violeur, et toutes autres choses où l'ignominie du récit contredit à la sainteté de la divinité.'

Le jugement porté sur les *Métamorphoses* est évidemment nettement moins favorable que celui qu'en avait Lactance, mais, vu la personnalité des deux auteurs, cela n'a rien de très surprenant ; Jérôme, du reste, connaît assez bien Ovide pour multiplier les exemples, et faire sourire ses lecteurs : comme Tertullien, c'est

³² Duval 1985, pp. 11-24.

une évidence, celle des *Métamorphoses*, qu'il énonce et qu'il utilise à des fins d'ironie.³³

La dernière mention tardo-antique d'Ovide, enfin, est chez Ausone ; elle est probablement antérieure à celle faite par Jérôme, ou, en tout cas, a excessivement peu de chances d'être postérieure.³⁴ Elle est dans l'*Epigr.* 72 Green (= 64 Schenkl) :³⁵

Vallebanæ (nova res et vix credenda poetis,
Sed quæ de vera promitur historia)
Femineam in speciem convertit masculus ales
Pavaque de pavo constitit ante oculos.
Cuncti admirantur monstrum, sed mollior agna
· · · · ·
'Quid stolidi ad speciem notæ novitatis hebetis ?
An vos Nasonis carmina non legitis ?
Caenida convertit proles Saturnia Consus
Ambiguoque fuit corpore Tiresias.
Vidit semivirum fons Salmacis Hermaphroditum,
Vidit nubentem Plinius androgynum.
Nec satis antiquum, quod Campana in Benevento
Unus epheborum virgo repente fuit.
Nolo tamen veteris documenta arcessere famæ :
Ecce ego sum factus femina de puero'.
· · · · ·
'Une chose inouïe, presque trop pour poètes,
Mais la source est fiable, à Vauban s'est produite :
Un volatile mâle est devenu femelle,
Et, de paon, s'est offerte une paonne à la vue.
Tous fixent la merveille ; or, soyeux de duvet,
[Un tendron, de sa voix virginale, leur dit :]
'L'inouï bien connu vous fascine, abrutis ?
Ne lisez-vous donc pas les poèmes d'Ovide ?

³³ Des remarques complémentaires sur ce passage (et son 'parallèle' augustien) dans Duval 1966, pp. 22-28.

³⁴ La datation strictement avant 383 de l'ensemble des œuvres transmises par l'archétype Z (ou ζ, ou ω) est communément abandonnée aujourd'hui, faute de preuves non controuvées. Ausone meurt à une date inconnue, nécessairement après 395, mais probablement assez peu d'années après.

³⁵ J'adopte par commodité le texte de l'éd. Green, bien qu'il me semble dans le détail critiquable. Je traduis 'Vauban' au v. 1 par commodité également, sans inférer de la justesse du texte à cet endroit ni de l'identification (vraisemblable, mais pas assurée). Au v. 6, je traduis *exempli gratia* le supplément fourni par Evelyn White (qui n'a nulle prétention à l'authenticité), *Talia virginea voce puella refert*.

Consus, fils de Saturne, changea bien Cénis,
 Tirésias fut bien de corps irrésolu.
 Salmacis vit Hermaphrodite, demi-homme,
 Et Pline vit un androgyne convoler.
 À Bénévent, en Campanie, soudainement,
 Une vierge devint éphèbe – c'est récent.
 Mais foin des vieux récits et des preuves qu'ils sont :
 Voici, j'étais garçon, femme suis devenue".'

Il s'agit là de l'unique mention d'Ovide chez Ausone, pourtant pas avare de références à ses prédécesseurs : elle n'en a que plus de poids, même si elle ne sert à introduire que trois exemples (Cénis/Cénée, *met.* XII. 189-209 ; Tirésias, III, 323-331 ; Hermaphrodite, IV. 285-388) avant que le narrateur n'invoque l'autorité de Pline l'Ancien puis un événement connu parce qu'advenu 'il n'y a pas si longtemps'. Mention unique, donc, mais affirmant une évidence à l'état pur, par *an*, par le présent *legitis* – il ne s'agit même pas d'une lointaine réminiscence d'école. Il est du reste impossible de mettre en doute qu'Ausone ne se fasse le témoin de la réalité de son temps, ou alors l'ironie perdrait tout son sens ; même si comparaison n'est pas raison, on peut transposer : on pourrait aujourd'hui encore, en France, lancer quelque chose comme 'N'avez-vous donc pas lu La Fontaine ?' en étant sûr de toucher juste (tout le monde n'a pas lu tout La Fontaine, mais tout le monde en a lu, en connaît par cœur, et saisit l'idée, le genre et ce qu'ils impliquent) ; en revanche, 'N'avez-vous donc pas lu Florian ?', est-ce pensable hors des *happy few* ?

4. Toutes ces occurrences, chacune à leur manière, témoignent d'une connaissance d'Ovide qui, dans certains cas (auprès du 'grand public') n'est peut-être que nominale, de réputation, mais demeure bien réelle. Pourtant, elles ne sont que de petites choses au milieu d'un silence assourdissant : on pense, par exemple, à l'absence totale de mention d'Ovide chez Augustin, dans l'œuvre de qui on ne trouve qu'un seul passage où il est difficile de ne pas supposer une réminiscence ovidienne.³⁶ Cela veut-il dire qu'Augustin

³⁶ Hagendahl 1967, pp. 468-469 (le nombre de ces quelques lignes, sur un ouvrage de plus de 700 pages, est en soi révélateur). O'Donnell 1980, p. 162,

n'a jamais lu Ovide ? Vu la masse des auteurs latins, y compris des poètes, qu'il connaît, c'est extrêmement improbable.

Il est délicat de tirer des éléments du silence des auteurs ; mais un exemple en particulier me paraît digne d'attention. On a vu il y a un instant qu'Ausone, indubitablement, connaît Ovide sur le bout des doigts, et sait, le cas échéant, en faire mention, et en faire mention comme de quelque chose qui va de soi. Il n'en est pas toujours ainsi : dans la postface au *Centon nuptial*, il 's'excuse' auprès de Paul, le dedicataire,³⁷ du caractère franchement pornographique du dernier poème de l'ensemble, l'*Imminutio* (éd. Green, p. 139) :

Sed cum legeris, adesto mihi adversum eos qui, ut Iuvenalis ait, 'Curios simulant et Bacchanalia vivunt', ne fortasse mores meos spectent de carmine. 'Lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba', ut Martialis dicit. Meminerint autem, quippe eruditi, probissimo viro Plinio in poematiis lasciviam, in moribus constitisse censuram, prurire opusculum Sulpiciae, frontem caperrare, esse Apuleium in vita philosophum, in epigrammatis amatorem, in praeceptis Ciceronis exstare severitatem, in epistulis ad Caerelliam subesse petulantiam, Platonis Symposion composita in ephebos epyllia continere. Nam quid Anniani Fescenninos, quid antiquissimi poetae Laevii Erotopaegnion libros loquar ? quid Evenum, quem Menander sapientem vocavit ? quid ipsum Menandrum ? quid comicos omnes ? quibus severa vita est et laeta materia. Quid etiam Vergilium, Parthenien dictum causa pudoris ? qui in octavo Aeneidos, cum describeret coitum Veneris atque Vulcani, *αἰσχροσεμνίαν* decenter immiscuit. Quid ? in tertio Georgicorum de summissis in gregem maritis nonne obscenam significationem honesta verborum translatione velavit ? Et si quid in nostro ioco aliquorum hominum severitas vestita condemnat, de Vergilio arcessitum sciat. Igitur cui hic ludus noster non placet, ne legerit, aut cum legerit obliviscatur, aut non oblitus ignoscat. Etenim fabula de nuptiis est : et, velit nolit, aliter haec sacra non constant.

va jusqu'à douter de la pertinence du rapprochement signalé par le précédent, mais cela me semble exagéré.

³⁷ Le *Centon* date du vivant de Valentinien I^{er}, puisqu'il est une réponse à un défi de l'empereur lui-même, peut-être (Green 1991, p. 518) à l'occasion du mariage de Gratien, vers 374. On ne connaît pas la date de la 'publication'.

‘Toi qui liras cela, soutiens-moi contre ceux qui, comme dit Juvénal, “jouent les Curius et vivent les Bacchanales”, au cas où ils déduiraient ma moralité de mon poème. “Notre page est lascive, probe notre vie”, comme dit Martial. Or qu’ils se souviennent, puisqu’ils ont des lettres, que Pline, le plus probe des hommes, professait la lasciveté dans ses vers, la censure dans ses mœurs ; que de Sulpicia le petit livre démange et le sourcil fronce ; qu’Apulée est philosophe dans sa vie et amant dans ses épigrammes ; que les préceptes de Cicéron sont tout sévérité et que la folâtrerie se glisse dans ses lettres à Caerellia ; que le *Banquet* de Platon contient des *epyllia* composés pour des éphèbes. Car que parlerai-je des chant Fescennins d’Annianus, des *Erotopaegnia* du très ancien poète Laevius ? d’Evenus, que Ménandre qualifia de sage ? de Ménandre lui-même ? de tous les comiques ? toutes gens dont la vie est sévère et le sujet joyeux. Que parlerai-je même de Virgile, que l’on appelle Virginal à force de pudibonderie ? puisque, au huitième chant de l’*Énéide*, dans sa description de l’union de Vénus et de Vulcain, il glissa élégamment du salace sacré. Qu’est-ce à dire ? au troisième livre des *Géorgiques*, au sujet des mâles destinés à la perpétuation du troupeau, ne couvrit-il pas un sens obscène par les mots d’un décent euphémisme ? Or si, drapés dans leur sérieux, d’aucuns condamnent quelque chose dans notre jeu, qu’ils sachent que c’est tiré de Virgile. Par conséquent, celui à qui notre jeu ne plaît pas, qu’il ne le lise pas, ou, s’il l’a lu, qu’il l’oublie, ou, s’il ne l’oublie, lui pardonne. À la vérité, c’est là une histoire de noces : qu’on le veuille ou non, ces rites ne s’accomplissent pas autrement.’

Toute l’histoire de la littérature y passe : Juvénal et Martial, cités expressément (respectivement 2. 3 et 1. 4. 8), puis, dans un désordre relatif, Pline, Sulpicia, Cicéron, Platon, Annianus Faliscus, Laevius, Evenus, Ménandre. Même Virgile fait l’objet d’un exposé assez détaillé, qui ne manque pas d’une certaine exagération : les deux scènes citées (*Aen.* VIII. 404-406 et *Georg.* III. 123-137) sont à cent lieues de l’obscénité. Dans la masse de ces noms alignés, on peut à bon droit dire qu’Ovide brille par son absence : il a donc délibérément été laissé de côté, lui qui ne cesse de clamer que son œuvre et sa vie sont strictement distinctes ; par exemple, *trist.* II. 347-358 :³⁸

³⁸ J’adopte pour le dernier distique le texte défendu par Diggle 1980, pp. 417-

Sed neque me nuptae didicerunt furta magistro,
 Quodque parum novit nemo docere potest.
 Sic ego delicias et mollia carmina feci
 Strinxerit ut nomen fabula nulla meum ;
 Nec quisquam est adeo media de plebe maritus
 Ut dubius vitio sit pater ille meo.
 Crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostro –
 Vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea –
 Magnaque pars mendax operum est et ficta meorum :
 Plus sibi permisit compositore suo.
 Nec liber indicium est animi, sed honesta voluptas :
 Plurima mulcendis auribus apta feret.

‘Je n’étais pas le maître en tromperie des femmes :
 Nul ne peut enseigner ce qu’il ne sait que peu.
 J’ai composé des chants lestes et des chimères
 Sans que rumeur jamais ne s’attache à mon nom ;
 Il n’est pas de mari, même parmi la plèbe,
 Qui, par ma faute à moi, doute d’être le père.
 Crois-moi, il y a loin de nos chants à nos mœurs –
 Ma vie est respectable, et badine ma Muse –
 La plupart de mon œuvre est mensongère et feinte :
 Elle s’est permis plus que n’a fait son auteur.
 Mon livre n’est pas moi, mais un plaisir honnête :
 Il offrira de quoi bien charmer les oreilles.’

Ausone pouvait tout trouver ici (et ailleurs) : une formule aussi lapidaire que celle qu’il emprunte à Martial, ou des développements sur ce que nous appellerions aujourd’hui la distanciation entre l’œuvre et l’auteur. Mais il l’a évité, soigneusement, et il faut que ce soit à dessein, du même dessein qu’Augustin évite toute mention d’Ovide dont il est inimaginable qu’il ne connaisse pas au moins des extraits.

On ne peut pas vraiment voir dans cette omission un scrupule religieux (ce serait bien la première fois, du reste, qu’Ausone en aurait un !) : Lactance avait suffisamment œuvré à rendre Ovide acceptable, et même plus, aux chrétiens.³⁹ On ne peut pas non

418 ; je ne sais s’il est authentique, mais il est en tout cas clairement supérieur à celui de toutes les éditions.

³⁹ Bien des siècles après, Fränkel 1945, pp. 162-163, dans une conclusion dont on pourra discuter le providentialisme mais pas le souffle, se fait encore,

plus, probablement, dire qu'Ovide aurait été un auteur 'pour petites classes', et donc peu digne d'être cité dans des œuvres de 'grand style', puisque les listes d'auteurs scolaires que nous avons ne le mentionnent pas.⁴⁰ La politique entrerait-elle en ligne de compte ? Schématiquement, la persécution d'Ovide par Auguste l'aurait-elle rendu sympathique à Lactance, puisque comparable, à titre de victime, aux chrétiens, et, en sens inverse, Ausone, produit et défenseur de l'*establishment*, aurait-il une prévention contre (ou au moins une réticence à nommer) quelqu'un qui regarde le pouvoir en place de loin, et avec un certain amusement ? Pourtant, et c'est finalement surprenant, on a toujours l'impression que, dans cette affaire, la postérité prend systématiquement le parti d'Ovide, ou au moins évite d'insister sur l'injustice de la condamnation par Auguste :⁴¹ la propagande des *Tristes* et des *Pontiques* est, sur le long terme, un succès. Est-ce alors qu'Ovide n'aurait été un auteur que du for privé, connu, apprécié à ce titre, mais indigne d'être cité ? Ce n'est guère probable, ne serait-ce que parce qu'il serait alors le seul des grands poètes latins à être dans ce cas.

Quelle est la raison de ce silence ? je ne le sais pas ; mais je crois que nous avons saisi là une donnée essentielle de la réception d'Ovide dans l'Antiquité tardive, après Lactance et avant Sidoine

je crois, l'héritier de Lactance en voyant en Ovide la transition nécessaire vers la christianisation de l'Empire.

⁴⁰ Je pense en particulier à celle que donne Jérôme, que cite et commente en ouverture Cameron 2004, pp. 3-4 (*adv. Rufin.* I. 16) : *Puto quod puer legeris Aspri in Vergilium ac Sallustium commentarios, Vulcatii in orationes Ciceronis, Victorini in dialogos eius, et in Terentii comoedias praeceptoris mei Donati, aequae in Vergilium, et aliorum in alios, Plautum videlicet, Lucretium, Flaccum, Persium atque Lucanum.* Certes, Jérôme parle de commentaires et non d'œuvres en principe, mais l'extrapolation est fondée. Les hypothèses de Gatti 2014, pp. 57-69, selon qui Ovide disparaît des 'programmes' scolaires de la fin du I^{er} siècle à la fin du V^e ou au début du VI^e (la date est issue de ce que dit Fulgence, cité plus haut) seront extrêmement fragiles aussi longtemps que l'on n'aura pas expliqué comment il se fait, alors, que *tous* les poètes compris entre ces dates attestent massivement d'une connaissance d'Ovide dont les racines sont les plus profondes.

⁴¹ Cela vaut également indirectement, par le biais des imitations : Fielding 2014, pp. 104-105, le démontre en détail pour Dracontius ; les cas d'Optatien Porphyre et de Claudien, qu'il mentionne en passant, sont pertinents également pour mon propos, bien qu'à un degré moindre (je remercie Ian Fielding d'avoir bien voulu me communiquer le texte de sa contribution, dont la version publiée m'était alors indisponible).

Apollinaire : même si tout le monde le connaît, à des degrés divers mais souvent très élevés, non seulement on n'en parle pas mais encore on évite de le faire.

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Résumé

Cet article s'intéresse aux sources directes, explicites, de la réception d'Ovide comme personne historique et comme auteur dans l'Antiquité tardive. Leur analyse révèle une situation paradoxale : alors que, vraisemblablement, tous les auteurs ou presque ont une connaissance

directe et vaste de l'œuvre d'Ovide, ils évitent, parfois de manière criante, de parler de lui. La raison de ce silence est à ce jour inconnue, et aucune hypothèse n'est satisfaisante.

Abstract

This paper's interest lies in the direct, explicit sources of the reception of Ovid (as a historical figure and as an author) in Late Antiquity. What they reveal is a paradoxical situation : while, as far as we can say, all the authors have a wide and direct knowledge of Ovid's works, they avoid, sometimes very strikingly, speaking about him. Up to now, the true reason of this fact remains unknown, as no hypothesis can pretend at being satisfactory enough.

THE LATE ROMAN EMPIRE
(IV-V CENTURY)

‘AN VOS NASONIS CARMINA
NON LEGITIS?’:
OVID IN AUSONIUS’ *EPIGRAMS*

Ausonius mentions Ovid only once in the whole of his work and he does so in an unusual epigram about sexual metamorphoses (*epigr.* 72):¹

¹ In this paper Ausonius' works are cited with their abbreviated titles, and according to the numbering and text of Green's edition (1999). The translations of Ausonius' and Rufinus' epigrams are by Kay 2001 (with some adaptations); the translations of the passages from Ovid are by Miller 1984 and Mozley 1985 (with some adaptations), and of the passages from Martial by Shackleton Bailey 1993.

‘At Vallebana – a strange matter and one scarcely credible even to poets, but taken from true reports – a male bird changed to female form and a peacock became a peahen before the eyes of onlookers. All wondered at the portent, but one smoother than a lamb [said]: “Why are you uncomprehending in the face of something strange but attested, you blockheads? Don’t you read Ovid’s poems? Consus, Saturn’s offspring, changed Caenis’ sex, and Tiresias had a body of indeterminate sex. The fount Salmacis saw Hermaphroditus the half-man, and Pliny witnessed an androgyne marrying. Nor is it all that long ago that one of the youths in Campanian Beneventum suddenly became a girl. I don’t however want to adduce my proof from old reports: look at me, I was boy and have turned female”.’

Ausonius is thus inspired by an episode which he presents as a curious piece of news, namely a peacock’s sudden change in sex from male to female, to introduce an erudite explanation entrusted to a character *mollior agna*, whom we discover only at the end is also the product of a sexual metamorphosis.² In the face of the general amazement prompted by the peacock phenomenon, the speaker reacts with a touch of acrimony, asking all the silly people who are so amazed by it whether they do not know the *carmina Nasonis* (vv. 7-8), and then reminding the protagonists of three sexual metamorphosis stories recounted in the *Metamorphoses* (vv. 9-11): Caenis, Tiresias, and Hermaphroditus.³ It is clear that the reference to Ovid and his work is of great significance, as it is located at the centre of the epigram and takes up a quarter of its verses.

It has justly been noted that the Ovidian examples are not all coherent with the subject treated by Ausonius.⁴ Indeed, his epigram is about an animal and a boy who are turned from male into

² On this epigram, cf. Green 1991, pp. 406-407; Kay 2001, pp. 209-213, who refers to the paradoxographic literature and especially to Phlegon of Tralles’ *Mirabilia* which contain many cases of sex change and hermaphroditism. The character speaking was clearly named in the lacuna in v. 6, which Evelyn White integrates with *talia virginea voce puella refert* (cf. *mollior agna* with Mart. v. 37. 1-2 *puella... agno... mollior*).

³ Cf. *met.* III. 316-338 (Tiresias); IV. 285-388 (Hermaphroditus); XII. 189-209, 470-476 (Caenis).

⁴ Cf. Kay 2001, pp. 211-212.

female, and only the case of Tiresias, changed into a woman for seven years, is strictly relevant. By contrast, the example of Caenis – seduced by Neptune⁵ and turned into a man (Caenus) by him as a gift so that she will no longer be exposed to male violence – is not pertinent, and neither is that of Hermaphroditus, who became an androgyne after his union with Salmacis. Evidently Ausonius was interested in displaying the presence, in mythology, of cases of ambiguous sexuality (broadly speaking and without distinguishing between transsexuality and hermaphroditism), as is shown by his insistence on the lexis of ambiguity: see *ambiguo corpore* (v. 10 with reference to Tiresias' sexual metamorphosis and retro-metamorphosis), *semivirum* and Hermaphroditus' very name (v. 11), and *androgynum* (v. 12). The examples chosen would thus appear to be deliberately inexact. In any case, they presuppose a detailed knowledge of Ovid's work,⁶ as is also shown by the technique of 'varying the model with the model': v. 9 *Caenida convertit proles Saturnia Consus* evokes (also in the framing alliteration) the verse which introduces the Caenis story (*met.* XII. 189 *clara decore fuit proles Elateia Caenis*), but also recovers the *proles Saturnia* nexus which appears only in Ovid in the same metrical position (*met.* XIV. 320 *Picus in Ausoniis, proles Saturnia, terris*); v. 11 *vidit semivirum fons Salmacis Hermaphroditum* clearly presupposes *Ov. met.* IV. 380-381 *ergo ubi se liquidas... undas / semimarem fecisse videt*, but the isoprosodic variant *semivirum* is drawn from Hermaphroditus' subsequent prayer to his parents (IV. 385-386 *quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat inde / semivir, et tactis subito mollescat in undis*), in which the metamorphosis is traced back full circle to the initial aetiological motif (IV. 285-287 *Unde sit infamis, quare male for-*

⁵ Here as elsewhere (*eccl.* 16. 19-20; *ordo* 87; *technop.* 8. 3), Ausonius uses the name *Consus* for Neptune, an Italic agricultural god in whose honour horse and donkey races were held from ancient times, and who was later identified with *Neptunus equestris*.

⁶ Ausonius also shows a thorough knowledge of the myth of Caenis, who was changed into a man and then back to a woman again after death, according to a version extant in Verg. *Aen.* VI. 448-449 (*iuvenis quondam, nunc femina, Caeneus / rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram*) but not in Ovid: cf. Auson. *Cupid.* 19-20 *irrita dona querens, sexu gavisia virili, / maeret in antiquam Caenis revocata figuram* (on which see Consolino in this volume, pp. 99-101). On transsexuality and hermaphroditism in Ovid's metamorphic universe, see Labate 1993, pp. 51-52.

tibus undis / Salmacis enervet tactosque remolliat artus, / discite. Causa latet, vis est notissima fontis). For this reason, I believe that the *vidit* (v. 11) of the manuscripts should be retained, while it is emended to *sensit* by Kay for the reason that in Ovid ‘Salmacis was the cause of Hermaphroditus’ metamorphosis and a part of it, not merely a witness to it’.⁷ Indeed, in our epigram Hermaphroditus’ metamorphosis is assumed to have taken place and Salmacis, who ‘sees’ the feminising effect of her waters, reveals her twofold nature as nymph and spring. Thus, with epigrammatic *brevitas*, Ausonius condenses Ovid’s tale and captures the complex ambiguity resulting from Salmacis’ fluctuating identity and the aetiological nature of this metamorphosis.⁸ Variations on this same myth are present in two mythological epigrams (111-112), which we will examine.

The fact that Ausonius mentions Ovid only in this epigram is not an indication of his limited knowledge or interest in the latter’s work. As is well known, Ovid is one of the most frequently present authors in Ausonius’ work, less than Virgil but on a par with Horace, although his name does not appear in the list of recommended reading he compiled for his grandson. As far as Latin poetry is concerned, this list is limited to the *modulata poemata Flacci*, the *altisonus* Maron and Terence *lecto sermone* (*protr.* 56-60). But clearly there is nothing surprising about the absence of the *eroticus* Ovid from a typical school curriculum.⁹ If we take a look at the index of *loci similes* collected by Schenkl, to which Green has added others,¹⁰ we can see that all Ovid’s works are present: the favourites are the *Metamorphoses*, followed by the elegies from exile, the erotic works and the

⁷ Kay 2001, p. 212, who also proposes *fecit* (Reeve) as an alternative to *sensit*, while he holds that *vidit* may have been introduced from the subsequent line.

⁸ For a re-examination of the ambiguities and interpretation issues arising from Ovid’s tale about Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, see Robinson 1999, especially pp. 219-221, who discusses the coexistence of *aition* and metamorphosis (wavering between androgyny and effeminacy) and the twofold identity of Salmacis.

⁹ Note that of the four authors recommended by Ausonius to his grandson (Virgil, Horace, Terence, Sallust), three appear in the *quadriga Messii* (Virgil, Sallust, Terence, Cicero, cf. GLK VII. 449); what is remarkable is rather the imbalance towards poetry and Cicero’s absence.

¹⁰ Cf. Schenkl 1883, p. 267; Green 1977, pp. 443-444.

Fasti; there are also the *Ibis* and the *Halieutica*, the latter used in the *Mosella*.¹¹ Given Ovid's pervasive presence in Ausonius' *Opuscula*, it may perhaps be surprising to find him named only in the epigrams where Martial, instead, is never mentioned, despite the fact that the influence of the latter is undoubtedly central in this type of production.¹² It could however be argued that the reference to Ovid and some of his erotic-sexual metamorphic myths performs an almost programmatic function, namely, to make explicit the significant impact of this model on the erotic and mythological (sometimes ekphrastic in type) sub-genres in Ausonius' epigrams.

2.

In Ausonius' epigrams in which eros – almost exclusively heterosexual – is treated in an idealised way, the elegiac component is undoubtedly marked, as has been repeatedly underlined, and Ovid plays an important role in this component. A typical example is the epigram for Galla, which has been much discussed as regards the manuscript text in v. 2, i.e. *rene* emended to *vere* by Avantius (*epigr.* 14):

Dicebam tibi, 'Galla, senescimus: effugit aetas.
 Utere vere tuo; casta puella anus est.'
 Sprevisi, obrepsit non intellecta senectus
 nec revocare potes qui periire dies.
 Nunc piget, et quereris quod non aut ista voluntas
 tunc fuit aut non est nunc ea forma tibi.
 Da tamen amplexus oblitaque gaudia iunge.
 Da fruar, etsi non quod volo, quod volui.

¹¹ Cf. Green 1977, p. 446. On Ovid's presence in the *Mosella*, cf. Posani 1962; Scafoglio 2000; Hernández Lobato in this volume; in the *Cupido cruciatus*, cf. Consolino in this volume. On the influence of Ovid's exile poetry in various works by Ausonius, cf. Pucci 2000; Rücker 2009; Moroni 2010. For a comparison between the Pythagoras of the *Metamorphoses* and Ausonius' Pythagoras (also present in *epigr.* 73), see McGowan 2014.

¹² Martial is also only cited once by Ausonius, at the end of the *Cento nuptialis* (*postf.* p. 139, 3–4 Gr.) where, to justify his bold re-use of Virgil's hemistichs in the obscene part of *Imminutio*, he appeals to the adage *lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba* (Mart. I. 4. 8). On the importance of this quotation, also relating to the themes and language of Ausonius' epigrams, see Mattiacci 2011, p. 91 and 2013b, p. 48 n. 9.

'I used to say to you: "Galla, we're getting old. Youth flies away; enjoy your springtime. A chaste girl is an old woman". You spurned me. Unperceived, old age crept up, and you cannot recall days which have gone by. Now you regret it, and complain that you didn't have the desire then and you don't have the looks now. All the same, embrace me and join us together in forgotten joys. Grant that I may enjoy, albeit not what I want, yet what I once wanted.'

As is well known, Ausonius begins by echoing an epigram by Rufinus (*AP* v. 21. 1-2): Οὐκ ἔλεγον, Προδίκη, 'γηράσκομεν'; οὐ προεφώνουν / 'ἥξουσιν ταχέως αἱ διαλυσίφιλοι'; ('Didn't I say, Prodi-ke, "We are getting older"? Didn't I prophesy "The dissolvers of love will soon be here"?'). But Rufinus then continues in a different way, insisting realistically (and pitilessly) on the no longer attractive appearance of the ageing woman, on her wrinkles, grey hair, worn-out body and graceless mouth, before concluding that no one looks for her anymore and everyone passes her by as if she were a tomb.¹³ Ausonius thus transforms an epigram on the *Vetulaskoptik* subject into an erotic-sentimental epigram in which it is the elegiac model whose influence predominates,¹⁴ although echoes from other sources are also present¹⁵ as well as an undoubtedly original conclusion: the melancholic regret for lost and unexploited youth does not rule out the potential for the joys of eros when *senectus* has crept up.¹⁶ The complexity of Ausonius' rewriting is evident, diverging from the Greek model evoked at the outset and then immediately abandoned, to adopt (and to alter with an unexpected ending) the motif of the invitation to the girl to take advantage of her youth

¹³ On the relationship with Rufinus' epigram, cf. Munari 1956, pp. 308-309; Benedetti 1980, pp. 63-67.

¹⁴ Cf. Di Giovine 1990; Kay 2001, p. 106. The passages referred to are: Tib. i. 8. 39-48; Prop. iv. 5. 59-60; Ov. *ars* iii. 59-70, on which see below; for vv. 5-6, see also Ter. *Hec.* 74-75; Hor. *carm.* iv. 10. 6-8.

¹⁵ Galla is the name of a woman who denies herself in Mart. iv. 38; v. 3 resumes with centonarian technique Iuv. 9. 129 *obrepit non intellecta senectus*; v. 8 echoes Mart. vi. 40. 4 (see below in the text). On the analogy between v. 2 (reading *rene*) and Mart. xi. 22. 10, see n. 18.

¹⁶ See, on the contrary, Tib. i. 1. 69-72 *Interea, dum fata sinunt, iungamus amores:... / iam subrepet iners aetas, nec amare decebit, / dicere nec cano blanditias capite*.

in love. This erotic reinterpretation of Horace's sapiential *carpe diem* warning (i.e. the flight of time is interpreted as the flight of the time of love and youth, in contrast to old age) is a frequent presence in Latin elegy. Ovid gives this motif special prominence in his pedagogy of love for *puellae* (*ars* III. 59-70):

Venturae memores iam nunc estote *senectae*:
 sic nullum vobis tempus abibit iners. 60
 Dum licet, et veros etiam nunc editis annos,
 ludite: eunt anni more fluentis aquae;
 nec quae praeteriit, iterum *revocabitur* unda,
 nec quae praeteriit, hora redire potest.
Utendum est aetate: cito pede *labitur aetas*, 65
 nec bona tam sequitur, quam bona prima fuit.
 Hos ego, qui canent, frutices violaria vidi:
 hac mihi de spina grata corona data est.
 Tempus erit, quo tu, quae nunc excludis amantes,
 frigida deserta nocte iacebis *anus*. 70

'Now already be mindful of the old age which is to come; thus no hour will slip wasted from you. While you can, and still declare your true age, have your sport; for the years pass like flowing water; the wave that has gone by cannot be called back, the hour that has gone by cannot return. You must employ your time: time glides on with speedy foot, nor is that which follows so good as that which went before. These plants, now withering, I saw as violet-beds; from this thorn was a pleasing garland given me. That day will come when you, who now shut out your lovers, will lie, a cold and lonely old woman, through the night.'

Ausonius shows clearly that he has taken on board Ovid's lesson. In particular, with *effugit aetas*. / *Utere vere tuo* (vv. 1-2), he resumes and inverts the concepts of *ars* 65, and this is an important clue to the need to link together the verb *utor* with a noun expressing the idea of time; while the second hemistich in v. 2 (*casta puella anus est*) effectively summarises vv. 69-70. All this would seem to confirm Avantius' excellent conjecture *vere*; the *rene* of the manuscripts is problematical, in fact, both in terms of form (the use of the singular) and in its obscene meaning (although euphemistically obscene, i.e. *cunno*),¹⁷ entirely

¹⁷ See Adams 1982, p. 92.

inappropriate to the context and the topos of the invitation to the *puella*,¹⁸ which we also find expressed in the same imperative form as in our text and with explicit reference to youth as the spring of life: see Tib. I. 8. 47-48 *at tu, dum primi floret tibi temporis aetas*, / *utere*; Prop. IV. 5. 59-60 *dum vernat sanguis, dum rugis integer annus*, / *utere*.¹⁹ This intertextuality, decisive for the constitution of the text, has been much emphasised by scholars. However, Ovid's presence is more pervasive than has been recognised to date and, in my opinion, also involves the 'translation' from Rufinus (v. 1). In fact, substituting the negative question of the Greek model with an affirmation (*dicebam*) followed by direct speech containing an admonishment (*utere*), Ausonius starts with the same gesture as *am.* I. 14. 1 *Dicebam: 'Medicare tuos desiste capillos!'* (advice which is equally disregarded by his beloved with supreme damage to her hair);²⁰ and once again, supplementing *senescimus* with the image of fleeting time (*effugit aetas*), he seems to contaminate the Greek verse with *fast.* VI. 771 *tempora labuntur, tacitisque senescimus annis*.²¹ The original thought of the last distich is also expressed with an interweaving of Ovidian linguistic elements, from the clause *gaudia iunge* (cf. *her.* 16. 319; *ars* II. 481) to the whole of v. 7,

¹⁸ Thus, rightly, Di Giovine 1990, p. 59, who takes up the perplexities about *rene* previously expressed by Traina 1989, pp. 171-172 n. 4, and confirms *vere* through the decisive comparison with the elegiac passages quoted above (see n. 14). He concludes that the doubts raised in favour of *utere rene tuo* by the parallel with Mart. XI. 22. 10 *utere parte tua*, where *pars* has an obscene meaning, are not such as to damage the substance of the arguments in favour of *vere*, whose corruption into *rene* is in fact easy to explain. The conjecture *vere* has been accepted by Schenkl 1883 and Green 1991 (= 1999); while *rene* is retained by Peiper 1886; Pastorino 1971; Prete 1978; Dräger 2012, and has been defended by Carletti Colafrancesco 1979; Benedetti 1980, pp. 67-68; Kay 2001, pp. 107-108.

¹⁹ But the reference to spring is also implicit in *ars* 67-68; cf. also Ov. *fast.* v. 353 *et monet* (sc. *Flora*) *aetatis specie, dum floreat, uti*. The metaphorical use of *ver* (i.e. 'youth') is well documented: cf. Apul. frg. 4. 7 Blänsd. (= *apol.* 9) *tu mihi des contra pro verno flore tuum ver*, frequently cited, and the other passages collected by Di Giovine 1990, p. 62.

²⁰ It is worth remembering that the hair dyeing theme, to which Ovid dedicates the entire elegy I. 14 of the *Amores*, is also present in Tib. I. 8. 41-44 (cit. above n. 14) in connection with the vain regret over lost youth in old age, and therefore the memory of the two elegies could intersect.

²¹ Cf. also Ov. *am.* I. 8. 49 and 53 *labitur occulte fallitque volatilis aetas [...]* *forma, nisi admittas, nullo exercente senescit*, where *aetas*, as in Ausonius, indicates youth and the second line expresses a similar concept to *casta puella anus est*.

comparable with *met.* IX. 560 *et damus amplexus et iungimus oscula*. The final words (*non quod volo, quod volui*), on the other hand, echo Martial (VI. 40. 4 *hanc volo, te volui*, equally at the end of the pentameter and epigram)²² and thus bring us full circle to the author to whom we owe the choice of the name Galla (see n. 15). In this way Ausonius encompasses the elegiac theme of the invitation to the *puella* in a frame which, alluding to Greek Rufinus and Roman Martial, is marked by evident references to the epigrammatic genre.

A similar process of 'contamination' of a Greek model – once again Rufin. *AP* v. 88 Εἰ δυσὶν οὐκ ἴσχυσας ἴσῃν φλόγα, πυρφόρε, καῦσαι, / τὴν ἐνὶ καιομένην ἢ σβέσον ἢ μετάρθεις ('If you cannot kindle an equal flame in two, Fire-bearer, either extinguish or transfer the flame kindled in one') – with Ovidian elements is to be found in *epigr.* 91:

Aut restingue ignem quo torreo, alma Dione,
aut transire iube vel fac utrimque parem.

'Gentle Dione, either extinguish the fire by which I am scorched, or order it to pass from me, or make the same for both of us.'

In the place of vocative *πυρφόρε* referring to Cupid, Ausonius introduces the apostrophe to Venus indicated as *alma Dione*. This is certainly less relevant to the image of love's fire on which the epigram is focused, but turns out to be functional to the 'Romanisation' of the model, because it recovers a clause from Ovid's erotic elegy in which the name Dione (actually Venus' mother) is used for Venus for the first time.²³

There are also some traces of Ovid in an interesting epigram dedicated to Ausonius' wife which transfers the language and themes of Catullian and elegiac love poetry into the conjugal sphere (*epigr.* 20):²⁴

²² For the anaphoric imperative *da*, we could refer to Verg. *Aen.* VI. 697-698 *da iungere dextram*, / *da, genitor, teque amplexu ne subtrahere nostro*.

²³ Cf. *ars* III. 3 (= III. 769) *alma Dione*; *am.* I. 14. 33 *nuda Dione*. The name *Dione* for *Venus* is also found in *ars* II. 593; *fast.* II. 461; subsequently in *Pervig. Ven.*, *AL* 200. 7 c 11 R² (= 191 SB); Tiberian., *AL* 809. 10 R² (= 1 Mattiacci = 4 Courtney).

²⁴ Cf. Sklenár 2005.

Uxor, vivamus ceu viximus, et teneamus
 nomina quae primo sumpsimus in thalamo,
 nec ferat ulla dies ut commutemur in aevo,
 quin tibi sim iuvenis tuque puella mihi.
 Nestore sim quamvis provector aemulaque annis 5
 vincas Cumanam tu quoque Deiphoben,
 nos ignoremus quid sit matura senectus:
 scire aevi meritum, non numerare decet.

‘My wife, let us live as we have lived and keep those names which we took when we were first married. Nor let any day bring it about that we change with passing time so that I am no longer your lad nor you my girl. Although I be older than Nestor and you too rival in years and surpass Deiphobe of Cumae, let us be ignorant of what ripe old age is. We ought to know the quality of our years, not to count them.’

The beginning echoes Catull. 5. 1 *vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus*, but the markedly prominent vocative *uxor* highlights the difference:²⁵ Ausonius’ wife Sabina has replaced Catullus’ lover Lesbia, and thus takes on an original wife-lover role. This is confirmed by the term *puella* (v. 4) which, in the wake of Catullus and the elegists, is used for a young woman who is an object of erotic interest; this term, together with *iuvenis*, locates Sabina and Ausonius’ relationship in the scenario of amorous interaction between *puellae* and *iuvenes* typified by the elegiac poets, including Ovid.²⁶ In such a context, the re-use in v. 3 of the Ovidian hemistich of *am.* III. 6. 18 *nec feret ulla dies* has been interpreted as further confirmation of the association with erotic elegy.²⁷ However, the extract the expression has been drawn from has no specific links with our epigram²⁸ and therefore its re-use would seem rather to be a hint of Ausonius’ centonarian technique, an element deriving from his vast mnemonic baggage with no

²⁵ Cf. Green 1991, p. 388; Kay 2001, p. 118; Sklenár 2005, p. 51.

²⁶ Cf. e.g. Prop. I. 9. 6; Tib. I. 3. 63; II. 1. 76; Lygd. 2. 1-2; Ov. *ars* I. 173 and 243; *rem.* 33; especially *ars* I. 217 *iuvenes mixtaeque puellae* taken up in Auson. *epigr.* 112. 3, on which see below.

²⁷ Cf. Sklenár 2005, p. 50.

²⁸ Faced with an overflowing stream which blocks his way to his beloved, the poet calls on Perseus’ wings or Triptolemus’ winged chariot, thus concluding: vv. 17-18 *prodigiosa loquor, veterum mendacia vatum: / nec tulit haec umquam nec feret ulla dies*.

allusive intent.²⁹ More interesting, in terms of the interweaving of elegiac and epigrammatic motifs, is actually the comparison with Nestor and the Sibyl as examples of extreme old age projected into a future which will change nothing in the relationship between the spouse-lovers. Propertius had already used these same examples in a similar erotic context, but obviously concerning a relationship which violated social conventions;³⁰ while Nestor's old age was recalled by Martial in an erotic-conjugal context, i.e. in an epigram which celebrated Calenus' happy marriage to the poet Sulpicia.³¹ This coincidence becomes more important if we remember that the precedent to Ausonius' erotic-conjugal poetry was, in fact, the poems by Sulpicia, who was celebrated by Martial (x. 35 and 38). Ausonius himself cites her at the end of *Cento nuptialis*, where he underscores the contrast between the salacious character of her verses and her irreproachable moral conduct, since she was evidently faithful to her husband (*cento, postf.* p. 139, 6-7 Gr. *prurire opusculum Sulpiciae, frontem caperrare*).³²

²⁹ The same could be said about the nexus *matura senectus* (v. 6): cf. Ov. *met.* III. 346-347 *an esset / tempora maturae visurus longa senectae*.

³⁰ Cf. Prop. II. 2. 15-16 *hanc utinam faciem nolit mutare senectus* (assonant with Ausonius' clause *matura senectus*) / *etsi Cumanae saecula vatis aget* (sc. *Cynthia*); II. 25. 9-10 *at me ab amore tuo deducet nulla senectus, / sive Tithonus sive ego Nestor ero*. These passages are quoted by Sklenár 2005, p. 57.

³¹ Mart. x. 38. 14 *malles quam Pyliam quater senectam* (Martial addresses Calenus saying that he would prefer a single happy day alongside Sulpicia to four times Nestor's old age). The meaning of the mythological example is obviously a little different here; however, it is significant that it is used to celebrate a conjugal relationship which was object of a cycle of erotic verses by the poet wife (see n. 32). On the other hand, the wish that the married couple may retain both beauty and mutual love, even in old age, is a motif present in poems celebrating the marriages of patrons and friends: cf. Mart. IV. 13. 9-10 (about the wedding of Claudia Peregrina and Pudens) *diligat illa senem quondam, sed et ipsa marito / tum quoque, cum fuerit, non videatur anus*; Stat. *silv.* I. 2. 275-277 *sic damna decoris / nulla tibi; longe virides sic flore iuventae / perdurent vultus, tardeque haec forma senescat* (final verses of the epithalamium for Stella and Violentilla).

³² On the so called second Sulpicia, of whose poems only a fragment has survived (Blänsdorf 2011⁴, p. 331; Courtney 1993, p. 361), on Martial's epigrams dedicated to her (x. 35 and 38) and on Ausonius' quotation, cf. Mattiacci 1999 with earlier bibliography. Subsequently, see the observations by Farrell 2001, pp. 72-73, about the bold female eroticism of Sulpicia's fragment (she writes of her nudity as she lies in bed with Calenus); see also the interesting re-examination of these verses by Martial and Sulpicia in relation to Ovid's *Ars* in Casali

The relationship with Ovid's erotic poetry is much stronger in epigrams 102 and 103. Although these epigrams are not always preserved together (they are found united in *Z*, but *V* contains only 103), they were clearly conceived as a diptych, because the latter assumes knowledge of the former.³³ In these verses Ausonius presents a lively dialogue between an unhappy lover and Venus: first he confesses to the goddess his existential dilemma (he can love only women who refuse him)³⁴ and then shows himself actually incapable of true passion, when he refuses the courting strategies suggested by the goddess:

'Hanc amo quae me odit, hanc contra quae me amat odi.³⁵
 Compone inter nos, si potes, alma Venus.'
 'Perfacile id faciam. Mores mutabo et amores:
 oderit haec, amet haec.' 'Rursus idem patiar.'
 'Vis ambas ut ames?' 'Si diligat utraque, vellem.'
 'Hoc tibi tu praesta, Marce: ut ameris, ama.' 5

"I love a girl who hates me, but I hate a girl who loves me. Sort it out amongst us, if you can, gentle Venus!" "I'll do it easily. I'll change their characters and preferences in love. Let the latter hate you, and let the former love you." "But I'll suffer the same again." "Do you want to love both?" "If both would reciprocate, yes!" "Settle it for yourself, Marcus. To be loved, love!"

'Suasisti, Venus, ecce, duas dyseros ut amarem.
 Odit utraque; aliud da modo consilium.'
 'Vince datis ambas.' 'Cupio, verum arta domi res.'
 'Pellice promissis.' 'Nulla fides inopi.'

2005, pp. 46-55 (if in her exaltation of conjugal eros Sulpicia took position against Ovid with a certain degree of didacticism, as this scholar supposes, it is possible that her new *ars amatoria* was a significant filter between Ausonius and the elegiac poets).

³³ See Kay 2001, p. 268, who justly observes also that the absence of 102 from *V* confirms they were separate, in contrast to what *Z* attests. If separate, the two epigrams have a stronger impact (on this technique, cf. Mart. ix. 43 and 44, perhaps also xi. 41 and 42, with the commentary by Kay 1995 *ad* xi. 41).

³⁴ A similar theme is found in *epigr.* 39 (with the commentary by Kay 2001, pp. 158-159) and Mart. v. 83.

³⁵ I follow here the text and argument of Kay 2001, p. 267: he takes up the inversion *hanc contra* proposed by Reeve (codd. *contra hanc*), which eliminates the hiatus and conserves the parallel with v. 4; Green, instead, takes up Peiper's correction *contra illam*.

'Antestare deos.' 'Non fas mihi fallere divos.' 5
 'Pervigila ante fores.' 'Nocte capi metuo.'
 'Scribe elegos.' 'Nequeo, Musarum et Apollinis expers.'
 'Frangere fores.' 'Poenas iudicii metuo.'
 'Stulte, ab amore mori pateris, non vis ob amorem?'
 'Malo miser dici quam miser atque reus.' 10
 'Suasi quod potui: <tu> alios modo consule.' 'Dic quos.'
 'Quod sibi suaserunt Phaedra et Elissa dabunt,
 quod Canace Phyllisque et fastidita Phaoni.'
 'Hoc das consilium?' 'Tale datur miseris.'³⁶

"Look here Venus, you persuaded me, unlucky in love as I am, to love two girls. They both hate me. Now give me different advice." "Win them both over with gifts." "I'd like to, but I've straitened circumstances at home." "Ensnare them with promises." "There's no trust in the poor." "Testify before the gods." "It is not right for me to deceive the gods." "Mount watch outside their doors." "I'm afraid of getting arrested at night." "Write elegies." "I can't. I have no experience of Apollo and the Muses." "Break down their doors." "I fear the punishment of the law." "You fool, you're prepared to die of love, but not for love?" "I'd rather be called unhappy than unhappy and on a charge." "I've given you what advice I can. You should ask others for advice now." "Tell me who." "Phaedra and Elissa will give you the counsel they gave themselves, as will Canace and Phyllis, and the one who was scorned by Phaon." "So that's your advice?" "That's advice fit for wretches!"

The first epigram begins, like that for Sabina (20. 1, quoted above), by echoing another celebrated motif from Catullus' poetry, the *odi et amo* of *carm.* 85, though here conceived as an inner conflict in relation not to a single woman but different categories of women ('I hate those who love me and love those who hate me').³⁷ The end of the poem is equally allusive, depending on Mart. VI. 11. 9-10 *ut praestem Pyladen, aliquis mihi praestet Oresten.* /

³⁶ On suspected author variants in Z, which reads in v. 1 *suasisti, Venus alma, duas Glyceras ut amarem* and in vv. 12-13 *Phaedra et Elissa tibi dent laqueum aut gladium, / praecipitem pelago vel Leuchados elige rupem*, see Kay 2001, pp. 268-269 (more generally on this issue, see Introduction, pp. 26-27).

³⁷ Kay 2001, p. 267, has justly noted that the reference in lines 1 and 4 is not to two specific girls, it is rather to categories of girls.

Hoc non fit verbis, Marce: ut ameris, ama; note that the identical hemistich is highlighted by its end position in both poems, and that it makes explicit Ausonius' tendency in his epigrams to borrow the proper names from Martial. However, in Martial the saying *ut ameris, ama* belongs to the sphere of friendship, or better to the client-patron relationship, which should be characterised by friendship. Ausonius, instead, refers this motto to the erotic sphere, thereby recovering its original function in Ovid: *ars* II. 107 *sit procul omne nefas*; ut ameris, amabilis esto (the inability of the love filters to conserve love is contrasted to the power of true love).³⁸ With a wink, via Martial, to Ovid's erotic precepts and his fundamental teaching on mutual love, Ausonius creates an opportune passage to the second epigram in which, using Venus' voice, a concise manual of 'courting art' is penned for Marcus, which is clearly Ovidian in inspiration. Indeed, everything the lover is advised to do to conquer his beloved's resistance, listed in an ascending climax, belongs to the behavioural code set out by Ovid for the elegiac lover: giving gifts (v. 3, cf. Ov. *am.* I. 10 and *ars* I. 447-454); making promises (v. 4, cf. Ov. *ars* I. 443-444 and 631); swearing by the gods (v. 5, cf. Ov. *ars* I. 632-636);³⁹ keeping watch at the beloved's door (v. 6, cf. Ov. *am.* I. 6); writing elegies (v. 7, cf. Ov. *am.* II. 1); entering forcibly by breaking down her door (v. 8, cf. Ov. *am.* I. 6. 57-58);⁴⁰ and lastly, the nexus *amore mori* in v. 9 is also of Ovidian matrix.⁴¹ But Marcus reacts to the romantic approach suggested by Venus by adducing material difficulties which try the goddess' patience: what she could do she has done, now he will have to turn to Phaedra, Dido, Canace, Phyllis and Sappho who will advise him to make the same choices they did (vv. 12-13). These famous heroines of myth and history are all present in the *Heroides* (respectively in 4, 7, 11, 2 and 15).⁴²

³⁸ Ovid's *sententia* has been subjected to numerous variations: as well as Martial and Ausonius, see Sen *epist.* 9. 6 *si vis amari, ama* (in which the motto is attributed to the Stoic Hecaton); for further examples in the Middle Ages and modern times, see Tosi 1991, pp. 644-645.

³⁹ Cf. also Tib. I. 4. 21.

⁴⁰ Cf. also Tib. I. 10. 53-54.

⁴¹ Cf. Ov. *am.* II. 7. 10 and *ars* I. 372; cf. also Mart. IX. 56. 9 *moriatur amore*.

⁴² Ovid's authorship of *her.* 15 (Sappho's epistle to Phaon) does not interest

This cannot be a mere coincidence; rather it confirms that Ovid is constantly present in the two epigrams, which evoke his entire erotic production, from the *Amores* to the *Ars* and the *Heroides* epistles. On the other hand, these women whose passion led them to suicide have nothing in common with Marcus, a character absolutely without passion and romanticism. In fact, he is directed to them only ironically and his final reaction (v. 14), showing his disappointment, is the definitive proof of his prosaic nature. From Venus' point of view, he is *miser*, namely incapable of loving and seducing, and thus he can do away with himself – an ironic way of showing him the door – by choosing one of the forms of suicide represented by these heroines: the sword, the rope or jumping off a cliff, and which they themselves are sometimes portrayed in the act of choosing, like Phyllis in *her.* 2. 131-142.⁴³ In conclusion, we could speak here of Ausonius' wish to 'miniaturise' the salient moments of Ovid's erotic poetry and adapt them to the epigram genre, which involves not only romantic love but also its opposite.

3.

The section of Ausonius' *Epigrammata* in which Ovid's presence stands out most is undoubtedly that of his mythological pieces, and in particular those which deal with metamorphic myths. *Epigr.* 72, quoted here at the beginning, in a certain sense refers programmatically to this type.

The mythological epigrams are a homogeneous group (106-114), which is only found in the Z family. Some of these, as we will see, are thematically linked to an earlier ekphrastic epigram on Echo, also present only in Z, which I shall start with (*epigr.* 11):⁴⁴

here, because it was not questioned by the grammarians and poets of late antiquity, and supposedly not even by Ausonius. On this issue, see Rosati 1989, pp. 49-50; Knox 1995, p. 7 n. 12.

⁴³ See also Sen. *Phaedr.* 259-260 *laqueone vitam finiam an ferro incubem? / an missa praeceptis arce Palladia cadam?*

⁴⁴ Among the mythological epigrams dealing with metamorphoses, we have also to remember *epigr.* 58 on Niobe turned into a rock (it is only found

Vane, quid adfectas faciem mihi ponere, pictor,
 ignotamque oculis sollicitare deam?
 Aëris et linguae sum filia, mater inanis
 indicii, vocem quae sine mente gero.
 Extremos pereunte modos a fine reducens
 ludificata sequor verba aliena meis.
 Auribus in vestris habito penetrabilis Echo;
 et, si vis similem pingere, pinge sonum.

5

‘Foolish painter, why do you attempt to put a face on me and importune a goddess whom eyes do not see? I am the daughter of air and language, the mother of useless information, who sport a voice without a mind. Going back over the final sounds from their dying cadence, I follow on other people’s words which are thus mocked by mine. I, penetrating Echo, live in your ears; if you want to paint my likeness, paint sound.’

Goddess Echo⁴⁵ addresses a painter who is imagined in the act of painting her and shows right from the start how vain his attempt is to give a *facies* to her, who is pure *vox*.⁴⁶ In Ausonius’ elegant couplets there is no trace of the Arcadian nymph that we find in a group of Greek ekphrastic epigrams dedicated to the same subject (*AP* xvi. 152-156). These refer to a visual representation of Echo and play in various ways on her echolalia without, however, specifying her physical characteristics and/or hinting at how acoustic information was channelled onto the visual plane.⁴⁷

in *V*); the source is probably Ov. *met.* vi. 146-312, but there are also evident Virgilian echoes (see Kay 2001, pp. 189-190). On *epigr.* 11, I resume here some observations made in Mattiacci 2013a, pp. 218-223.

⁴⁵ Echo was a nymph often linked to Pan (see below, nn. 49-50), i.e. an Arcadian divinity, although *dea* (v. 2) is not a frequent appellation for her: see Kay 2001, p. 96, referring to Apul. *met.* v. 25. 3 and two anonymous Greek epigrams (*AP* ix. 382. 4 a Homeric cento, and xvi. 156. 1 on which see n. 47).

⁴⁶ The importance of *vane* is underlined by its opening position and by the specific type of ‘framing’ hyperbaton in the hexameter, on which see Kay 2001, p. 95. A similar attack appears in Auson. *epigr.* 65. 1 *Daedale, cur vana consumis in arte laborem?*

⁴⁷ This series of epigrams is preceded by the lemma Εἰς ἄγαλμα Ἥχου παρὰ τοῦ Πανός; however, they do not say anything about the precise type of depiction, but only show that it is a visual image (see xvi. 154. 1-3 Ἥχῳ πετρήεσσιν ὄρας [...] ἄλλον εἰκόνα; xvi. 156. 1-2 Ἀρκαδικὰ θεός εἰμι, παρὰ προθύροις δὲ Λυαίου / ναίω; see also Bonadeo 2003, p. 132 n. 5). These epigrams, whose date and attribu-

The sole point of convergence with Ausonius (only in *AP* XVI. 156, but see also *AP* IX. 27) would seem to be the paradoxical choice to give an autonomous voice to Echo, making her speak of herself and even explain her own echolalia, thus denying, at the exact moment that it is affirmed, her fundamental *vox sine mente* characteristic. The singularity of Ausonius' epigram consists in the fact that the nymph's body, and with it any possible descriptive strategy, has completely dissolved. This presupposes, alongside or in antithesis to a well-known iconographic tradition,⁴⁸ the presence of an equally well-known – and for this reason shared by the readership – literary tradition. We refer to Ovid's tale of the unhappy nymph who, in a progressive sequence of *deficit* (first, the loss of the faculty of independent speech, as punishment by Juno, then the withering away of her body as a result of Narcissus' refusal) was finally made immaterial and reduced to sound alone (*met.* III. 395-401):⁴⁹

tion are uncertain (see Gow-Page 1968 II, pp. 432-435; Page 1981, pp. 89-93 and 111-112), do not overlap with our text in any precise way (see Gagliardi 1990, pp. 42-43; Kay 2001, p. 95), but they do show that the Echo ekphrastic subject was suitable for metaliterary considerations (cf. especially *AP* XVI. 154 and Gutzwiller 2002, pp. 105-106), a characteristic which Ausonius, as we will see, exploits in an very original way. On the Greek epigrams dedicated to Echo or which play on the echo phenomenon (Callimachus' is famous, *epigr.* 28 Pf. = *AP* XII. 43), see Männlein-Robert 2007, pp. 309-320.

⁴⁸ For the iconographic tradition on Echo, see Bonadeo 2003, pp. 131-143. On the Pompei frescoes, in which the female figure alongside Narcissus is mainly interpreted as Echo, see also LIMC III 1, pp. 681-682; VI 1, pp. 703-704; Elsner 2007, pp. 170-176.

⁴⁹ Echo was traditionally linked to Pan or the young Narcissus; both versions were inspired by an aetiological intention and were similar in their structure, but the extraordinary description of Echo's final dissolution into pure sound is undoubtedly an Ovid's invention (cf. Rosati 1983, pp. 24-25; in Long, III. 23, the aetiological fable of Echo concludes with a more 'physical' *sparagmos*, due to Pan's revenge). Although in Ausonius there is no mention of Echo as a nymph, his epigram clearly presupposes Ovid's metamorphosis, as is confirmed by the verbal echoes and by *epigr.* 110, on which see below. On the two versions linking Echo with Pan or Narcissus, see Bonadeo 2003, pp. 81-119; on the Echo / Narcissus relationship, of which there is no trace prior to Ovid, and on the issue of whether this depends on a lost Hellenistic source or is Ovid's brilliant innovation, see Rosati 1983, pp. 22-24; Pellizer 2003, pp. 58-62; Bonadeo 2003, pp. 92-93 with bibliography. On Ausonius' epigrams devoted to Echo and Narcissus, in addition to the commentary by Kay 2001, pp. 94-97 and 279-281, see also Vinge 1967, pp. 26-27; Bonadeo 2003, pp. 108-109 and 131; Pellizer 2003, pp. 92-93.

Sed tamen haeret amor crescitque dolore repulsae;
 attenuant vigiles corpus miserabile curae
 adducitque cutem macies et in aëra sucus
 corporis omnis abit. Vox tantum atque ossa supersunt:
 vox manet; ossa ferunt lapidis traxisse figuram.
 Inde latet silvis nulloque in monte videtur,
 omnibus auditur; sonus est qui vivit in illa.

‘But still, though spurned, her love remains and grows on grief; her sleepless cares waste away her wretched form; she becomes gaunt and wrinkled and all moisture fades from her body into the air. Only her voice and her bones remain: then, only voice; for they say that her bones were turned to stone. She hides in woods and is seen no more upon the mountain-sides; but all may hear her, for voice, and voice alone, still lives in her.’

This is how the aetiological tale, which begins with *corpus adhuc Echo, non vox erat* (III. 359), concludes. On an intra-textual level, it constitutes the premise and a sort of duplication of the Narcissus episode, which is the fulcrum of Ovid’s narrative; while on an extra-textual level, it is the *conditio sine qua non* of Ausonius’ epigram, suspended between the mythic reality of Echo (cf. terms *dea, filia, mater*) and the non-mythic reality of the echo (cf. Auson. vv. 5-6 and Ov. III. 359-361 *usum / garrula non alium, quam nunc habet, oris habebat, / reddere de multis ut verba novissima posset*). Thus, starting from the complete dematerialisation of the Ovidian nymph, Ausonius ably captures in just a few verses the interaction between the natural phenomenon and its mythological personification: on one hand the disappearance of the nymph’s body into the air and the survival of her voice alone, which propagates from the phonation organs through the air (cf. v. 3 *aëris et linguae sum filia*⁵⁰ with Ov. III. 397-399 *in aëra*

⁵⁰ *Filia* is both metaphorical and allusive to an original corporeality (which dissipated in the air). For the metaphorical use, see e.g. Hor. *carm.* I. 14. 12; Mart. XIII. 35. 1. The metaphorical genealogy of our text could also be read as a polemic alternative to other genealogies which had Echo as the daughter of a nymph and a mortal father (cf. Long. III. 23. 1), or Juno’s daughter (cf. Ps.-Lact. *Plac. fab.* Ov. III. 5; Mythogr. Vat. I. 182; II. 207, perhaps for the reason that Juno was considered goddess of the air: see Bonadeo 2003, p. 110 and n. 104). On the other hand, *aëris et linguae filia* echoes *imago verbi* or *vocis* (Lucr. IV. 571; Verg. *georg.* IV. 50; Ov. *met.* III. 385), which is the specific Latin definition for ‘echo’, alternative to the Greek calque *echo*.

sucus / corporis omnis abit [...] vox manet) until it penetrates the ears (cf. v. 7 *penetrabilis Echo* with Ov. III. 358 *resonabilis Echo* in the same metrical position);⁵¹ on the other the echolalia which stops her from talking on her own initiative and obliges her to repeat the last words uttered by others, often altering or even overturning their meaning mockingly (cf. vv. 5-6 *extremos pereunte modos a fine reducens / ludificata sequor verba aliena meis* with Ov. III. 368-369 *tantum haec in fine loquendi / ingeminat voces auditaque verba reportat*: note the presence of the iterative prefix *re-* and the term *ludificata*,⁵² alluding to the 'illusory reflex' motif that obsessively recurs in the Echo-Narcissus couple tale). On the pregnant opposition between sight and hearing, condensed by Ovid in the last two verses of the metamorphosis (III. 400-401 *nullo [...] videtur, / omnibus auditur*), Ausonius constructs his epigram, using this opposition as a frame for the text (v. 2 *ignotam [...] oculis / v. 7 auribus in vestris habito*) and eliminating, precisely with her location *in auribus* as mere sound, the last trace of Echo's physical identity with which the Ovid's text 'provocatively' closed (III. 401 *sonus est qui vivit in illa*).⁵³ Thus, the oppositional sound/image parallelism running through the whole of the Echo-Narcissus tale – on the micro-structure level see III. 400-401 (cit. above), on the macro-structure see the analogy between sound reflection (Echo) and mirror reflection (Narcissus) – is ingeniously adapted to the ekphrastic content of the epigram and made functional to the challenge issued to the painter: to represent visually (v. 1 *faciem*) a character transformed by a textual reality into pure acoustic phenomenon and, as such, not belonging to the visual sphere.

⁵¹ For the adjective *penetrabilis* (in the active sense) in reference to sound, cf. Apul. *met.* v. 7. 2 (in a passage alluding to the echo phenomenon) *sono penetrabili vocis ululabilis per prona delapso*. Ovid's clause *resonabilis Echo* is, on the other hand, literally reiterated in *epigr.* 110, on which see below. Note also that Ausonius respects in both cases Ovid's quasi formulaic choice to place the term *Echo* at the end of the hexameter (see Barchiesi 2007, pp. 185-186).

⁵² No change in meaning occurs if this participle is interpreted as passive (i.e. derived from the active form, as is preferred by Kay 2001, pp. 96-97, referring to Auson. *technop.* 10. 4), or as active (i.e. derived from the deponent form): in both cases *ludificata* alludes to the illusory, deceptive nature of the phenomenon, as well as the expression *mater inanis indicii* (vv. 3-4).

⁵³ *In illa* presupposes, in fact, a corporeality which Echo no longer has (see Barchiesi 2007, p. 189).

We cannot say whether this epigram, entitled *In Echo pictam* in some manuscripts, refers to a real or an imaginary painting. In any case the impossibility of the *pingere sonum* synesthetic enterprise, which condemns the Echo painter to defeat, could be related to the almost total absence of representations of Echo by herself in the figurative panorama known to us.⁵⁴ Given his attention to Ovid's text, Ausonius could be generically referring to the dominant iconography in the imperial period – clearly inspired by the *Metamorphoses*⁵⁵ – in which Echo is depicted together with Narcissus gazing at his mirror image in the spring, when in actual fact the nymph had already lost her body according to the story. Figurative art could not, in any case, avoid choosing this concisely allusive method to show Echo's presence. But it is precisely this and other visual stratagems⁵⁶ which Ausonius seems to be opposing in insisting on the purely aural, non-corporeal nature of the post-metamorphosis nymph. In this way he communicates, with the *brevitas* and powerful ending typical of the epigrammatic genre, a reflection on the complex relationship between words and images which is totally absent in the Greek epigrams on Echo. Ausonius' *ekphrasis* thus takes on a metaliterary value. In fact, at the moment in which it reveals the insufficiency of visual means of representation, it shows the potential of the poetic word which by means of allusion gives readers 'erudite eyes'⁵⁷ capable of seeing the invisible (Echo's dematerialisation). Moreover, playing with the paradox of the ekphrastic tradition, the poetic word not only gives a voice to a mute image, but it replaces this image through the act of *pingere sonum*, starting from where Ovid had stopped. The choice of the borderline case of Echo deprived of her body as subject, namely the *ekphrasis* of an 'impossible' painting, on the one hand shows Ausonius' original contribution to ekphrastic poetry, whose

⁵⁴ See Bonadeo 2003, pp. 131-132 and 145.

⁵⁵ For us represented above all by Pompeian painting (see n. 48).

⁵⁶ On the figurative representations of Echo and the iconographic stratagems adopted to express visually her sound identity (with a hand at her mouth, veiled or hidden, and seated on rocks), see the bibliographical references quoted in n. 48 and Mattiacci 2013a, pp. 219-220.

⁵⁷ On this definition and the similar 'knowing eye' definition, see Barchiesi 2004 and Goldhill 1994 respectively. On the word/image relationship and the poetics of *ekphrasis*, see Mattiacci 2013a and its bibliography.

artifices he reveals,⁵⁸ and on the other represents in an exemplary fashion the self-sufficiency of the poetic text, which dialogues with other texts rather than with images. What is more, the expression *ludificata sequor verba aliena meis* grasps the essence not only of the ekphrastic subject but also of Ausonius' poetics, constantly hinging on the verbal and intertextual *lusus*,⁵⁹ of which this epigram is a paradigmatic example in its fundamental link to Ovid's tale of metamorphosis. This link is even more evident if we compare Ausonius' fine composition with some verses from the *Anthologia Latina* where Echo is depicted as a *virgo* incapable of speaking autonomously, as in the Greek epigrams cited above, or else as a mere personification of the acoustic phenomenon, without any reference to her metamorphosis.⁶⁰

Of the group of mythological epigrams (106-114), all belonging to the sphere of eroto-pathology, the first two (106-107) are dedicated to Hylas, whose myth does not appear in the *Metamorphoses*,⁶¹ despite an extant version in which the youth was transformed into a spring or an echo.⁶² The other seven epigrams, instead, deal with well-known Ovidian myths: Narcissus (108-110), Hermaphroditus (111-112), Apollo and Daphne (113-114).

The epigrams on Narcissus are to be related to the Echo epigram. Indeed, they confirm the outcome of the intertextual analysis given above, namely that, while this text contains no explicit reference to Echo as a nymph, it clearly presupposes

⁵⁸ On the ways in which Ausonius ably exploits Greek ekphrastic epigram conventions for satirical purposes too, see Floridi 2013.

⁵⁹ On this aspect of Ausonius' poetics, see Nugent 1990; Squillante 2009.

⁶⁰ See respectively: Symph. *AL* 286. 98 R² (= 281 SB) (*Echo*) *Virgo modesta nimis legem bene servo pudoris. / Ore procax non sum, nec sum temeraria linguae. / Ultro nolo loqui, sed do responsa loquenti*; Pentad. *AL* 235. 13-14 R² (= 227 SB) *per cava saxa sonat pecudum mugitibus Echo / voxque repulsa iugis per cava saxa sonat*.

⁶¹ Ovid mentions Hylas as a paradigm of beauty in *ars* II. 110 (*Naiadumque tener crimine raptus Hylas*) and as one of the great many erotic subjects in *trist.* II. 406.

⁶² On Hylas' transformation into a spring, perhaps attested by Ausonius himself in *epigr.* 107. 3 (*ephebus iste fons erit*, but *flos* codd.), see Green 1991, p. 418; Kay 2001, p. 279, who conserves *flos*, however. On Hylas' transformation into an echo, which appears in the version of *Ant. Lib.* 26, cf. Fabiano 2012. On Hylas' epigrams, see now Mattiacci 2017, pp. 34-39.

Ovid's metamorphic tale. A clear clue to this is provided by Echo's grief as Narcissus is dying (110); this demonstrates that Ausonius was linking the two myths together, following the *Metamorphoses*, where this link appears for the first time.⁶³ Furthermore, the literal reiteration of the Ovidian clause *resonabilis Echo* (*met.* III. 358) in 110. 1, varied with *penetrabilis Echo* in 11. 7, provides a linguistic clue to the link between the two epigrams, as well as between both of them and Ovid's text. The three brief poems dedicated to Narcissus could have links with a work of visual art, given the frequency of this subject in art from the first century CE onwards, probably as a result of the famous account of the myth in the *Metamorphoses*;⁶⁴ however, in our verses, the only hint of the ekphrastic conventions which refer to the visual sphere is represented by the *sic* in 109. 2.

The first epigram is a monodistich in which the poetic voice addresses Narcissus directly (*epigr.* 108):

Si cuperes alium, posses, Narcisse, potiri;
nunc tibi amoris adest copia, fructus abest.

'If you desired another, Narcissus, you could possess him;
as it is you have every opportunity for love, but no enjoyment
of it.'

The distich focuses on the opposition between 'erotic desire' (*cuperes, amoris*) and 'possession' (*potiri, fructus*), on the reality of one and the impossibility of the other, evoking the curse which one of the many rejected lovers directs at Narcissus in Ovid: *met.* III. 405 *sic amet ipse licet, sic non potiat amorato*. The hypothesis put forward in the first line contains the key element (*alium*) to escape this curse; however, the tenses of irreality (*cuperes... posses*) show the bitter realisation of the ominous presage in a present which seems unchanging (see v. 2 *nunc* and the polarity, underlined by the almost perfect homophony, between *adest* and *abest*). The metaphorical use of the couple *copia / fructus*

⁶³ Cf. n. 49. In none of the poems dedicated to Narcissus in the *Anthologia Latina* is made reference to Echo: see the monodistichs 39, 145-147, 219 R² (= 26, 134-136, 210 SB), and Pentadius' epigrams 265-266 R² (= 259-260 SB); the same can be said of the Virgilian cento *Narcissus* (*AL* 9 R²), on which see now Galli 2014, pp. 73-91.

⁶⁴ Cf. n. 48.

(the abundance of the harvest and the potential for enjoying it), highlighted by the chiasitic structure, also presents parallels in the erotic lexis (cf. Prop. III. 20. 30 *semper amet, fructu semper amoris egens*), in particular in relation to Narcissus' love: *met.* III. 466 *quod cupio, mecum est: inopem me copia fecit*, where the first hemistich represents, in a certain sense, the response to the unreal hypothesis formulated by Ausonius *si cuperes alium*.

In the following epigram, also a monodistich, the subject is an unspecified *amator* who stands for all the unrequited lovers (male and female) attributed to Narcissus by the myth (*epigr.* 109):

Quid non ex huius forma pateretur amator,
ipse suam qui sic deperit effigiem?

'What would a lover not suffer from this boy's beauty, who loves his own reflection to distraction in this way?'

After setting out Narcissus' inner drama, namely the love of oneself which renders *inops* (108), the focus is now placed on the external cause, i.e. on the beauty (*forma*) which has caused this drama and also acts on others with equally painful effects. The idea, in fact, is this: if his beauty (*huius* refers to *Narcisse* in the previous epigram)⁶⁵ is such that he himself dies for love of his own image, what torments would those in love with him suffer? The epigram 'miniaturises' the two 'acts' into which the Narcissus myth is divided in Ovid: the hexameter condenses the first part (*met.* III. 351-406), which tells how the beautiful sixteen-year-old kindles the vain desire of *iuvenes* and *puellae*, because an obstinate pride dwells in his *tenera forma* (and the unhappy story of the nymph Echo is a paradigm of this);⁶⁶ while the pentameter refers to the second part (III. 407-510), which tells the story of how Narcissus falls in love with his image reflected in the water.

⁶⁵ This shows that *epigr.* 109 presupposes 108, confirming the author's tendency to link pieces on the same theme to be read in sequence, as we have seen for *epigr.* 102-103.

⁶⁶ This part opens with *multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae; / sed (fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma) / nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae* (vv. 353-355), and concludes, coming full circle after the insertion of the Echo story, with *sic hanc, sic alias undis aut montibus ortas / luserat hic nymphas, sic coetus ante viriles* (vv. 402-403). It is evident that *amator* in Ausonius symbolises all Narcissus' unrequited lovers – boys, girls, nymphs, with implicit reference also to Echo.

Forma and *effigies* (variant of *imago*) are the key terms of the whole Narcissus story, around which Ausonius constructs his epigram and Ovid a verse emblematic of his narration: *met.* III. 416 *dumque bibit, visae correptus imagine formae*.

In a sort of chronological progression, the last epigram of the triptych represents Narcissus' death, linking it to Echo (*epigr.* 110):

Commoritur, Narcisse, tibi resonabilis Echo,
votis ad extremos exanimata modos,
et pereuntis adhuc gemitum resecuta querellis
ultima nunc etiam verba loquentis amat.

'Resounding Echo dies with you, Narcissus, gasping her last at the final sounds of your voice; up to now she has followed your sighs with her lament as you withered away, and now too she loves the last words of a speaker.'

The initial verb *commoritur*, by means of the prefix underlined by *tibi*, establishes a strong bond between the two figures named in the first line: Echo dies together with Narcissus, exhaling her soul as she echoes the last sounds of his voice; still following with her laments the moans of the dying boy, she continues to love his last words (but also the last words of anyone who speaks). The participle *loquentis* is, in fact, deliberately ambiguous, as it could refer to either Narcissus or any other speaker, and the clear allusion to Echo's twofold nature, both nymph and acoustic phenomenon, decidedly refers to the ekphrastic epigram *In Echo pictam*. As has been said, *resonabilis Echo* (the adjective appears nowhere else in classical and post-classical Latinity)⁶⁷ is a 'quotation' from Ov. *met.* III. 357-358 *vocalis nymphe, quae nec reticere loquenti / nec prius ipsa loqui didicit*, *resonabilis Echo*; from these verses Ausonius also takes the insistence on the prefix *re-* (*resonabilis*, *resecuta*) which, together with the verb *loquor*, renders the subject's echolalia.⁶⁸ Indeed, the very theme of this piece, i.e. Echo's weeping over the dying Narcissus, is an original rewrit-

⁶⁷ Two medieval examples (twelfth to thirteenth century) emerge from the *LLT* online resource.

⁶⁸ See also Ov. *met.* III. 368-369 *tantum haec in fine loquendi / ingeminat voces auditaque verba reportat*. For the verb *resequor* referring to speech (but in the sense of 'reply'), Kay 2001, p. 281, refers once again to Ov. *met.* VI. 36; XIII. 749.

ing in epigrammatic form of what Ovid recounts at the end of his story. Though now aware that the youth he yearns for is his own reflection, Narcissus continues to be consumed by his madness, and his body is no longer the one Echo fell in love with. Yet she returns, now immaterial, to contemplate him and repeat his last words (*met.* III. 494-501):

Quae tamen ut vidit, quamvis irata memorque
indoluit, quotiensque puer miserabilis 'eheu!'
dixerat, haec *resonis* iterabat vocibus 'eheu!'
cumque suos manibus percusserat ille lacertos,
haec quoque *reddebat* sonitum plangoris eundem.
Ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam:
'heu frustra dilecte puer!' totidemque *remisit*
verba locus, dictoque 'vale' 'vale' inquit et Echo.

'But when she saw it, though still angry and unforgetful, she felt pity; and as often as the poor boy says "Alas!" again with answering utterance she cries "Alas!" and as his hands beat his shoulders she gives back the same sounds of woe. His last words as he gazed into the familiar spring were these: "Alas, dear boy, vainly beloved!" and the place gave back his words. And when he said "Farewell!" "Farewell!" said Echo too.'

Note here too the insistence of the iterative prefix *re-* which, together with the duplication of *eheu* and *vale*, mimes the echo's acoustics; in particular the refined final verse, characterised by the enantiometry produced by the prosodic hiatus (*vālē vālē* | *inquit*), is in my opinion of fundamental importance for Ausonius. Indeed, while in Ovid the last reciprocal good-bye implies, with ambiguous irony, that 'la voce di Eco sta surrogando per Narciso l'impossibile voce della sua immagine riflessa',⁶⁹ this farewell also justifies the equally ambiguous *com-moritur* of the epigram because, being now pure sound, the nymph cannot die,⁷⁰ if not in virtue of the intertextual relation-

⁶⁹ Barchiesi 2007, p. 284.

⁷⁰ In Ovid's text, in fact, Echo's weeping continues after Narcissus' death together with that of the other nymphs: vv. 503-507 *lumina mors clausit domini mirantia formam* / [...] *planxere sorores* / *Naides* [...] / *planxerunt Dryades; plangentibus adsonat Echo*. For a convincing interpretation of the presence of

ship with that Ovidian verse: Echo dies together with Narcissus (see also *exanimata*) because she loves his last words (v. 4), which are a final goodbye to life. Thus concludes the brief epigram cycle dedicated to Narcissus. In it there is no trace of the young man's metamorphosis into the flower of the same name.⁷¹ Ausonius seems principally to be interested in the Ovidian paradoxes of reflection, the visual reflection leading to love of oneself and the sound reflection in the inserted myth of Echo, a figure evidently dear to him and the protagonist of the scene of Narcissus' death.⁷²

Another couple made famous by Ovid is Hermaphroditus and Salmacis (*met.* IV. 285-388), to whom Ausonius dedicates the two successive four-line epigrams, the former in hexameter and the latter in distich (epigr. 111-112):

Mercurio genitore satus, genetrice Cythere,
nominis ut mixti, sic corporis Hermaphroditus,
concretus sexu, sed non perfectus, utroque,
ambiguae Veneris, neutro potiendus amori.

'Hermaphroditus, born with Mercury for father, Cytherea for mother, composite in body as in name, embodying both genders but fully formed in neither, of ambiguous sex, who can be possessed by neither kind of love.'

Salmacis optato concreta est nympha marito;
felix virgo, sibi si scit inesse virum.
Et tu, formosae iuvenis permixte puellae,
bis felix, unum si licet esse duos.

'The nymph Salmacis has fused together with the husband she yearned for; she is happy maid if she knows her husband is inside her. And you are twice happy youth, having mixed with this beautiful girl, if it is possible for one person to be two.'

Echo in the literary scenes of funerary grief (including Ovid but not Ausonius), see Bonadeo 2002.

⁷¹ Ovid dedicates only the last two verses of his tale to the metamorphosis: vv. 509-510 *nusquam corpus erat; croceum pro corpore florem / inveniunt foliis medium cingentibus albis*. Narcissus as flower is instead mentioned by Ausonius in *Cupid.* 10, on which see Consolino in this volume, pp. 93-95.

⁷² As is highlighted by the title of this epigram in some manuscripts: *De Echo dolente propter mortem Narcissi*.

In the first piece Ausonius seems to be attributing Hermaphroditus' *mixtus* sex to birth, combining the genders of his father and his mother (see *concretus*).⁷³ There is, in fact, no reference whatsoever to the metamorphic fusion with Salmacis which Martial, by contrast, is so explicit about, though in his epigram as well we find a similar connection between Hermaphroditus' sexual ambiguity and his parents (evidently an acquired ambiguity, because he was born *masculus*): XIV. 174 (*Hermaphroditus marmoreus*) *Masculus intravit fontis, emersit utrumque: / pars est una patris, cetera matris habet*. However, while moving away here from Ovid to follow what was very probably the original tradition of a bisexual Hermaphroditus since his birth, Ausonius begins with a verse which alludes openly to the *incipit* of Ovid's tale: *met.* IV. 288 *Mercurio puerum diva Cythereide natum*⁷⁴ (perhaps contaminating it with v. 384 *date [...] et pater et genetrix, amborum nomen habenti*). Then, with a subtle variation, he refers to Hermaphroditus' name and *corpus mixtum* (v. 2) the union between the two divine parents which in his model is referred to the name and resemblance in the son's face.⁷⁵ Lastly, in vv. 3-4 there are key words which also indicate sexual ambiguity in Ovid: cf. *met.* IV. 378-379 *nec duo sunt sed forma duplex, nec femina dici / nec puer ut possit, neutrumque et utrumque videtur* (sc. *Her-*

⁷³ The use of the same form in 112. 1 makes the divergence between the two mythical versions of the origins of Hermaphroditus' bisexuality more evident, the older one attributing it to birth and the Ovidian version relating it to metamorphosis as aetiology of the powers of the Salmacis spring which makes bodies effeminate. On this issue, see Bömer 1976, pp. 100-104; Labate 1993, pp. 52-53; Rosati 2007, pp. 284-285.

⁷⁴ Ausonius changes the syntactic relationship, making *Mercurio* an ablative, and uses the form *Cythere* (as in *epigr.* 40. 3 and 62. 5, always at the end of the line) which is to be found in Greek but not in Latin prior to him (cf. ThLL II. 811. 21-29); the current form is *Cytherea*, cf. Verg. *Aen.* I. 657 = Aus. *cento* 83. See also *AP* IX. 783 (late anonymous epigram) where a speaking statue of Hermaphroditus, placed in a bisex bath, says to have the *symbola* of both parents, Hermes and Cypris. Our epigram's structure, lacking a main verb, is to be found in Greek epideictic and inscriptional epigrams (see Kay 2001, p. 282).

⁷⁵ Cf. *met.* IV. 288-291 *Mercurio puerum diva Cythereide natum / Naides Idaeis enutrivere sub antris, / cuius erat facies, in qua materque paterque / cognosci possent; nomen quoque traxit ab illis*. On the other hand – as is rightly noted by Labate 1993, p. 53 – it is precisely in these opening verses that Ovid conserves traces of the original legend which he decided to move away from: this allusion to the rejected version of the myth (an Alexandrian poetic affectation) has been well grasped by Ausonius.

maphroditus); *ibid.* 280 *ambiguus fuerit modo vir, modo femina Sithon*, where *ambiguus* does not indicate hermaphroditism but – as we have already seen in epigram 72 in reference to Tiresias – the change from man to woman and vice versa. In conclusion, Ausonius is returning here to the older version of the Hermaphroditus myth, but telling it in Ovid's words.

In epigram 112, instead, the relationship with Ovid is not simply a matter of verbal echoes (see the 'centonarian' reiteration in v. 3 of *ars* I. 217 *iuvenes mixtaeque puellae*), but also presupposes the version of the myth passed down in the *Metamorphoses* and already mentioned in epigram 72. Hermaphroditus is bisexual as a result of his union with the nymph Salmacis; he is a single body formed by two bodies of different genders, of which the epigram, by assigning one distich to each of the two subjects, is a sort of icon. However, here too, there is a deviation from the model: the *makarismos* (*felix... bis felix*) emphasis highlights the happy fate of the couple united forever by the metamorphosis. This corresponds to the feelings of the Ovidian Salmacis, who defines *longe beatior* the young man's future bride (note the same *makarismos* formula and the reference to the wedding reiterated by Ausonius in the nexus *optato... marito*) and lastly, at the moment of the fatal embrace, asks the gods that the two bodies should never be separated.⁷⁶ But happiness does not correspond to Hermaphroditus' sentiments in Ovid: he resists the nymph and, after the metamorphosis, expresses disgust for his *semivir* softness calling on his parents to curse the waters which cost him the loss of his virility (*met.* IV. 380-386):⁷⁷

Ergo ubi se liquidas, quo vir descenderat, undas
semimarem fecisse videt mollitaque in illis
membra, manus tendens, sed iam non voce virili

⁷⁶ Cf. *met.* IV. 322-326 *qui te genuere, beati / et frater felix et fortunata profecto / si qua tibi soror est, et quae dedit ubera nutrix; / sed longe cunctis longeque beatior illis, / si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere taeda*; IV. 371-372 *ita di iubeatis et istum / nulla dies a me nec me diducat ab isto*.

⁷⁷ This aspect is, on the other hand, taken up in the verse dedicated to Hermaphroditus' metamorphosis in 72. 11 (see above, p. 51). See Rosati 2007, p. 284: 'Più che sulla doppia sessualità di Ermafrodito, esso (i.e. Ovid's text) insiste [...] sulla perdita della virilità, sull'effiminatezza della nuova figura [...] e sul disgusto che il fenomeno provoca nel ragazzo che ne è vittima: dunque l'eziologia di un *nomen* che si rivela *omen* (Hermaphroditus diventa hermaphroditus)'.

Hermaphroditus ait: 'nato date munera vestro,
et pater et genetrix, amborum nomen habenti;
quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat inde
semivir et tactis subito mollescat in undis.'

'When now he saw that the waters into which he had plunged had made him but half-man, and that his limbs had become enfeebled there, stretching out his hands and speaking, though not with manly tones, Hermaphroditus cried: "Oh, grant this boon, my father and my mother, to your son who bears the names of both: whoever comes into this pool as man may he go forth half-man, and may he weaken at touch of the water".'

The unhappy ambiguity of the dual sex which can enjoy neither kind of love – the concept with which epigram 111 finishes (*ambiguae Veneris, neutro potiendus amori*) – now gives way to a reflection which illuminates the paradox of Ovid's metamorphosis: by 'literally' realising the 'metaphorical' image of the lover who aspires to merge with his/her beloved into a single body, it reconstructs the original unity of the Platonic androgyne, which cancels the lovers' distance and at the same time their desire.⁷⁸ Ausonius has well grasped that 'la nuova creatura prodotta dalla trasformazione risolve il tragico desiderio di Salmacide in una realtà inerte ma pacificata'. However, he introduces a deliberate divergence as regards Hermaphroditus' point of view on this metamorphosis: thus *bis felix* (this double happiness corresponds literally to being two people in a single body⁷⁹) comes across as clearly ironic when faced with the pain of the Ovidian character at his loss of identity and virility. The two Hermaphroditus epigrams therefore reveal a shrewd reading of the *Metamorphoses* and a sophisticated technique of 'imitatio cum variatione'. They dialogue with Ovid and between each other as well, offering readers different interpretations and perspectives on the same myth.

⁷⁸ Cf. Labate 1993, pp. 59-62, from which the following quotation comes (p. 61). For the famous androgyne myth, cf. Plat. *symp.* 189e-193d.

⁷⁹ The perfect union between happy lovers motif is noted by Kay 2001, p. 283, who does not, however, note the divergence from Ovid. He also supposes a twofold sexual meaning in the terms *inesse* (v. 2) and *permixte* (v. 3).

An equally insightful reading of Ovid's great poem is pre-supposed by the last two epigrams of the mythological section. They concern the myth of Apollo and Daphne, one of the most successful in literature and iconography starting from *met.* I. 452-567. Here too, Ausonius may have had works of art in mind, but there is nothing which explicitly indicates this. The metrical alternation of elegiac distich (113) and hexameter (114) chiastically reproduces (and with half the number of verses) that of the previous diptych:

Pone arcum, Paean, celeresque reconde sagittas:
non te virgo fugit, sed tua tela timet.

'Put down your bow, Paean, and put away your swift arrows:
the maiden is not fleeing you, but she fears your weapons.'

Invide, cur properas, cortex, operire puellam?
Laurea debetur Phoebus si virgo negatur.

'Envious bark, why do you hurry to cover the girl? Laurel
is due to Phoebus, if the maiden is denied him.'

As Kay has suggested, Apollo's arms, on which epigram 113 focuses (not only *tela* as in Mart. XI. 78. 6, but perhaps retroactively also *arcum* and *sagittas*),⁸⁰ are very likely intended in a *double entendre* as male genitalia, because the supreme desire of Daphne, who for this reason is indicated as *virgo*, is to preserve her virginity (*met.* I. 486-487 *da mihi perpetua, genitor carissime* [...] *virginitate frui*). On the other hand, bows and arrows play an important role in Ovid's episode, because it is precisely the ironic pride with which Apollo treats Cupid, intent on drawing his bow,⁸¹ that provokes the divine boy's irate response (vv. 463-464 *figat tuus omnia, Phoebus, / te meus arcus*) and his immediate revenge: he shoots with two different *tela* Phoebus and Peneus' daughter, the god with the golden arrow of love, and the nymph with the leaden arrow that rejects love. The epi-

⁸⁰ See Kay 2001, pp. 283-284. For the metaphorical use of *telum*, he refers precisely to Ausonius in *cento* 92 and 120; for *arcus* (= *penis*) to Apul. *met.* II. 16. 6 (see also Adams 1982, pp. 19 and 21); while in *sagittae* he supposes a reference to ejaculation by extension of the image.

⁸¹ Cf. *met.* I. 452-456 *primus amor Phoebi Daphne Peneia, quem non / fors ignara dedit, sed saeva Cupidinis ira. / Delius hunc [...] viderat adducto flectentem cornua nervo / 'quid' que tibi, lascive puer, cum fortibus armis?*

gram thus shifts the focus from the arms of Cupid to those of Apollo, whose bow, with its power of *figere omnia*, becomes an ambiguously ironic threat for a virgin! The flight motif is also central to Ovid's tale, where the lexemes linked to *fugio* are obsessively reiterated starting from v. 502 *fugit ocior aura / illa levi* until v. 544 when Daphne's pursuer catches up with her.⁸² Ausonius' *non te virgo fugit* seems almost to reply to what Apollo says in Ovid: vv. 514-515 *nescis / quem fugias, ideoque fugis*. And the epithet *Paean* is also to be found in the same metrical position in v. 566,⁸³ where it serves to underline the god's final victory when he takes possession of Daphne, though not in human form.⁸⁴ But it is necessary to quote the conclusion of the episode, important to understand epigram 114, which in chronological progression condenses the subsequent phases of the myth (*met.* I. 553-559 and 566-567):

Hanc quoque Phoebus amat, positaque in stipite dextra
sentit adhuc trepidare novo sub *cortice* pectus,
complexusque suis ramos, ut membra, lacertis
oscula dat ligno; refugit tamen oscula lignum.
cui deus 'at quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse,
arbor eris certe' dixit '*mea*; semper habebunt
te coma, te citharae, te nostrae, laure, pharetrae.
[...]

Finierat *Paean*; factis modo *laurea* ramis
adnuat utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen.

'But even now in this new form Apollo loved her; and placing his hand upon the trunk, he felt the heart still fluttering beneath the bark. He embraced the branches as if human limbs, and pressed his lips upon the wood. But even the wood shrank from his kisses. And the god cried out to this: "Since thou canst not be my bride, thou shalt at least be my tree. My hair, my lyre, my quiver shall always be entwined with thee, O laurel [...]". Paean was done. The laurel waved her new-made branches, and seemed to move her head-like top in full consent.'

⁸² Nine uses can be counted: vv. 502, 506, 511, 515 (twice), 526; 530; 541; 544.

⁸³ As far as the structure is concerned, 113. 1 seems to refer to Iuv. 6. 172 *parce, precor, Paean, et tu, dea, pone sagittas*.

⁸⁴ See Barchiesi 2005, p. 214.

If the metamorphosis called on by Daphne (vv. 546-547 *fer, pater [...] opem [...] / qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram*) is intended to create an unsurmountable barrier between her and Apollo, it is revealed to be vain because the god reaffirms his power by making the laurel tree the symbol of his cult.⁸⁵ Ausonius shows a good grasp of the meaning of Ovid's myth and, in an exemplary exercise in *brevitas*, highlights its salient points. The epigram focuses on the first stage of the metamorphosis which Ovid describes analytically:⁸⁶ the bark rapidly takes over the girl's body but doubts on its usefulness are raised right away (*epigr.* 114. 1 *cur properas, cortex, operire puellam?*). Furthermore the personification of *cortex* by means of the apostrophe, clearly and paradoxically distinguishing the vegetal element from the *puella* (in actual fact it is itself the *puella*), highlights the 'barrier' which counters the god's libido (cf. v. 554) and expresses the cruel aspect of the metamorphosis in an extremely essential way: the guilty overpowering of the girl's body (see *invide* in strong position), the destruction of her beauty and identity. The contiguity of *puellam / laurea*, bridging the two hexameters, renders the rapidity of the passage from one form to another also visually, and what follows, conceptually resuming vv. 557-558 (for *laurea* cf. v. 566), assures the god's triumph and thus the pointlessness of the metamorphosis except for one point: it guarantees Daphne the *perpetua virginitas* (invoked by her in vv. 486-487) that the appellation *virgo*, present in both epigrams instead of her name, emphasises.

This analysis of the mythological epigrams confirms the self-referentiality of the question posed in epigram 72: 'do you not read Ovid's poems?' implies 'do you not read them as I do?'. Ausonius' miniature myths always grasp the essential aspects of Ovid's text or play on taking their distance from them in an ongoing dialogue with the model that presupposes a reading which is anything but superficial. The brevity of the majority of the epigrams examined leads to a fertile expressivity as well as to a condensation of the myth into a few allusive brush strokes

⁸⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 213-215.

⁸⁶ *Met.* 1. 548-552 *vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus; / mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro; / in frondem crines, in ramos brachia crescunt; / pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret; / ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa.*

that refer readers to a well-known literary and iconographical tradition. This process has a precedent in the ekphrastic section of Martial's *Apophoreta* (xiv. 170-182) where, amongst the various gifts visually portraying mythical characters, we also find a *Hermaphroditus marmoreus* (xiv. 174):

Masculus intravit fontis: emersit utrumque:
pars est una patris, cetera matris habet.

'He entered the fountain a male; he came out double-sexed.
One part is his father's; the rest he has of his mother.'

As we have seen, Martial follows Ovid's version of the myth, while Ausonius moves away from it precisely in the epigram in which he presents Hermaphroditus as ambiguous union, in both name and sex, between his father and mother (111. 1-2). It is evident that this diverse interpretation of the myth does not exclude his memory of the *Apophoreta* distich.⁸⁷ Martial mentions Hermaphroditus elsewhere, too: as an example – together with Hylas and other mythical youths – of the absurd fantasies of mythological poetry and their distance from real life (x. 4. 3-6 *quid tibi raptus Hylas [...] aut qui / odit amatrices Hermaphroditus aquas?*); and – once again associated with Hylas – as a paradigm of beauty for a *puer delicatus* whom the nymph of Lucrine Lake, where he drowned, evidently preferred to the two protagonists of the 'aquatic' myths (vi. 68. 7-10):⁸⁸

Numquid te vitreis nudum lasciva sub undis
vidit et Alcidae nympha remisit Hylan?
An dea femineum iam neglegit Hermaphroditum
amplexu teneri sollicitata viri?

'Did a wanton nymph see you naked under the glassy water
and send Hylas back to Alcides? Or does the goddess now
neglect womanish Hermaphroditus, stirred to passion by the
embrace of a youthful man?'

⁸⁷ See above, p. 75. See also the verbal similarity, though mediated by the shared source (Ov. *her.* 6. 124 *cetera patris habent*), between Martial's last hemistich and Auson. *Caes.* 99 *cetera patris habens*. Leary 2002, p. 236, links Mart. xiv. 174 with Auson. *epigr.* 111, but does not mention the different version of the myth used by the two authors.

⁸⁸ On the use of mythology in Martial, despite his declared hostility to mythological poetry, see Perruccio 2007, pp. 76-134.

It is also in these two passages that it becomes clear how, in contrast to Ausonius, Martial follows strictly the mythological version proposed by the *Metamorphoses*. Indeed, the former case underscores Hermaphroditus' hostility towards the *aquae amatrices*, which apparently continues after the metamorphosis, thereby ruling out the idea of a happy, indissoluble union; while the second insists on the subject's post-metamorphosis effeminate nature, as *semivir*, rather than on his/her bisexuality.

On the other hand, taking account of the fact that the Hylas myth is absent from the *Metamorphoses*, perhaps it was the bond established by Martial between Hylas and Hermaphroditus that in some way influenced their significant presence in Ausonius' mythological epigrams. However, an element of differentiation is the absence, in this cycle, of myths and references of the homosexual erotic type. In fact, not only does Martial use the two youths as paradigms of beauty to celebrate various *pueri delicati* in occasional epigrams, but he also considers Hylas' bond with Hercules⁸⁹ and dedicates one of the ekphrastic distichs in the *Apophoreta* (xiv. 173) to Hyacinth beloved by Apollo. Ausonius, on the contrary, limits himself to heterosexual erotic myths and makes no mention of Hercules when he speaks of Hylas; this evidently reflects his tendency not to idealise homosexual love, almost always depicted in his epigrams in an obscene and satirical manner.⁹⁰ Another difference is the limited presence in Martial of the Daphne myth and the total absence of references to the Narcissus and Echo story, one undoubtedly favoured by Ausonius, becoming even a theme of his poetics. But quite apart from these thematic differences, Martial is a very important model for the adaptation of Ovid's mythical material to the short epigrammatic form, an example of the 'miniaturisation' of myth that Ausonius exploits in an original way to propose new and elegant variants on the *Metamorphoses* tales.

⁸⁹ In addition to the epigrams cited above in which Hylas is to be found alongside Hermaphroditus, cf. also v. 48. 5; vii. 15. 2; vii. 50. 8; ix. 25. 7; ix. 65. 14; xi. 43. 5.

⁹⁰ Cf. Mattiacci 2011, pp. 89-90. The only weak presence of the homoerotic theme is in the Glaucia epitaph (*epigr.* 53), on which see Floridi 2012.

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Abstract

Starting from the explicit reference to Ovid in an epigram by Ausonius dealing with sexual metamorphoses (72), this paper examines a series of erotic (14; 20; 91; 102-103) and mythological (11; 108-114) epigrams by this author, which show a significant presence of Ovid (especially of the *Amores*, the *Ars* and the *Metamorphoses*). The aim of this analysis is to highlight on the one hand the various forms taken by of Ausonius' allusive technique, on the other the particular success of certain elegiac themes and Ovidian metamorphic myths, which Ausonius adapts to the short form of epigram, following the significant precedent of Martial. Most importantly, Ausonius' miniaturised myths always grasp the essential aspects of the *Metamorphoses* tales or else play on taking their distance from them, in an ongoing dialogue with the model which presupposes a careful and insightful reading of Ovid's text.

FLOWERS AND HEROINES: SOME REMARKS ON OVID'S PRESENCE IN THE *CUPIDO CRUCIATUS*

Aeris in campis, memorat quos Musa Maronis,
myrteus amentes ubi lucus opacat amantes,
orgia ducebant heroides et sua quaeque,
ut quondam occiderant, leti argumenta gerebant,
errantes silva in magna et sub luce maligna 5
inter harundineasque comas gravidumque papaver
et tacitos sine labe lacus, sine murmure rivos¹

The opening lines of the *Cupido Cruciatus* make explicit reference to the sixth book of the Aeneid, which provides a setting suitable for the action² and is also recalled at the end of the poem, where Amor passes forth through the same gate of ivory (l. 103 *portaque evadit eburna*) crossed by Aeneas at the end of his journey to the underworld.³ Last but not least, some of the *mulieres amatrices* who are the protagonists of Ausonius's poem come from the passage on the *lugentes campi*, as the author himself declares in his preface in prose.⁴

Ausonius however is not totally faithful to Virgil's representation.⁵ His heroines do not dwell in the *lugentes campi*, but in

¹ Auson. *Cupid.* 1-7. My quotations of Ausonius follow Green's 1999 edition.

² Cf. l. 2 *myrteus lucus* ~ *Aen.* vi. 443-444 *myrtea ... silva*; l. 5 *errantes silva in magna et sub luce maligna* ~ *Aen.* vi. 451 *errabat silva in magna* (here the subject is Dido) and *Aen.* vi. 270-271 *quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna / est iter in silvis*.

³ Cf. *Aen.* vi. 898 *portaque emittit* [Anchises] *eburna*, at the end of the hexameter as in Ausonius.

⁴ Auson. *Cupid. praef.* 3-7 *Cupidinem cruci affigunt mulieres amatrices, non istae de nostro saeculo, quae sponte peccant, sed illae heroicae, quae sibi ignoscunt et plectunt deum. quarum partem in lugentibus campis Maro noster enumerat.*

⁵ On Ausonius's 'infidelity' to Virgil cf. Mondin 2005, pp. 344-351; Peltari

the aerial fields (l. 1 *aeris in campis*) mentioned in *Aen.* vi. 887, where the souls waiting for reincarnation stay and which, according to Ausonius, are the place of dreams.⁶ They are holding frantic rites (l. 3 *orgia ducebant*)⁷ and are depicted bearing tokens of the death they died (l. 4 *leti argumenta gerebant*), mainly following their own iconography. More importantly, Virgil is not alone in supplying the characters of the story.⁸ All the heroines who are not in the *lugentes campi* – as well as those who are there – are present in Ovid, specifically in the *Metamorphoses* and/or in the *epistulae heroidum*.⁹

Ausonius himself, although he does not mention him, seems to suggest the pre-eminence of Ovid among his sources of reference and inspiration, by the use of the term *heroides* in line 3, which immediately reminds the reader of the *epistulae heroidum*. This term, however, attested since Laevius,¹⁰ occurs nine times in poetry before Ausonius, and in three passages it refers to the heroines in the underworld: *Culex* 261 (*obuia Persephone comites heroidas urget*), Prop. III. 28. 29 (*Et tibi Maeonias omnis heroidas inter*) and Stat. *silv.* v. 1. 255, where Proserpina and the heroines of old welcome the recently deceased Priscilla.¹¹ The contexts

2014, pp. 139-140. On the general attitude of Ausonius towards Virgil *Aen.* vi see also Gindhart 2006 and Davis 1994.

⁶ For *aer* as the place of dreams in Ausonius cf. Green 1991, p. 528 *ad loc.* On the meaning of the expression *aeris in campis* and its possible philosophical background and implications in the *Cupido cruciatus*, see Santini 2002, pp. 244-251; Mondin 2005, pp. 351-356.

⁷ *Aen.* vi. 517-518 *Illa* [Helena] *chorum simulans euhantis orgia circum / ducebat Phrygias* ‘may have’ and in my opinion it actually has ‘suggested the phrase’ (Green 1991, p. 528 *ad loc.*), even if *orgia ducebant* cannot be considered ‘un evidente ricalco’ (Franzoi 2002, p. 50) from the grammatical point-of-view, because in Virgil *orgia* is not the object of *ducebant*.

⁸ Evadne is the only Virgilian heroine absent from the *Cupido cruciatus*.

⁹ As Lucifora 1979, p. 264, remarks ‘non bisogna disconoscere il ruolo basilare esercitato da Ovidio, presente tanto nelle citazioni quanto nell’impulso visivo impresso alla poetica del *Cupido*. La sua influenza infatti non è meno sensibile di quella virgiliana: molte delle protagoniste non vengono mai menzionate in Virgilio, sono invece eroine care alla fantasia ovidiana. La loro presenza nel poemetto, che è poi una trattazione sommaria del mito, implica una vasta conoscenza della materia ovidiana’.

¹⁰ Laevius *carm. frg.* 15. 2 ed. Blänsdorf 2011⁴ *impos <et> aegra sanitatis herois*.

¹¹ *Silv.* v. 1. 253-257 *Praeterea, si quando pio laudata marito / Vmbra uenit, iubet ire facies Proserpina laetas / Egressasque sacris ueteres heroidas antris / Lumine purpureo tristes laxare tenebras / Sertaque et Elysios animae praesternere flores*.

of *Culex* and *silv.* v. 1 are rather far from that of the *Cupido cruciatus*, while Propertius, who imagines the dead Cynthia in the company of all the renowned heroines of the past, speaking with Semele, is likely to have inspired the introduction of the character of Semele at ll. 16-18.¹²

In this paper I will focus on the two passages of the *Cupido cruciatus* concerning the flowers of the afterworld and the representation of the heroines who are the protagonists of Cupid's dream. The analysis of these sections, where Ausonius's reference to Ovid is particularly evident, should help to better evaluate how and to what extent Ausonius echoes, refers to or draws on Ovid,¹³ even though he does not mention him.¹⁴ Despite the number of Ovidian female characters in the *Cupido cruciatus*, Ovid's presence and influence are not easy to evaluate, since the myths recalled or alluded to are also witnessed by other literary and mythographic sources.¹⁵ Therefore, in many cases it could be

¹² Cf. Franzoi 2002, p. 50 and p. 65 *ad loc.*

¹³ Given the character of my analysis, I will not dwell on the relationship of the *Cupido cruciatus* with other important literary models, first of all Virgil *Aen.* vi. As for the much-debated question of the real existence of a painting or a figurative cycle representing the story told by Ausonius, there is no reason for denying the existence of such a work, since the author himself indicates its place and its owner. It is however quite probable that this painting was just the starting point or the pretext for Ausonius, partly because 'se gli avvenimenti cantati nel *Cupido cruciatus* fossero tutti effigiati sulle pareti del *triclinium*, ivi avrebbe dovuto trovarsi un ciclo di pitture' (Lucifora 1978, p. 317). The poet takes into account the iconographical tradition, as it is well proved by Fauth 1974, but very freely develops his narrative into a "fantasia" mitologica' (Mondin 2005, p. 339), devoid of any properly religious or mystery implication (cf. Schmitzer 2006, pp. 182-183). Therefore, I agree with Franzoi 2002, pp. 7-12 and Mondin 2005, pp. 340-342 in not considering our poem to be an *ekphrasis*, all the more because in the preface in prose Ausonius speaks of a *nebula picta*, and there is no reason to correct the transmitted *nebula*, which is a *lectio difficilior*, into *tabula*, as Green 1991 and 1999, among others, does (on this question see Mastroianni 1996, pp. 545-554).

¹⁴ Ovid is mentioned only once by Ausonius, in *epigr.* 72. 8, on which, see Mattiacci in this volume.

¹⁵ Unlike in Ausonius's epigrams, it is impossible to assess sure references in the *Cupido cruciatus* to Greek sources. For this reason my analysis will not take them into account, especially since Greek mythology was deeply rooted in Latin literary practice, and since Ausonius mostly attempts but a certain Greek 'flavour' in his poems, where – generally speaking – 'la culture grecque vient ... en plus de la culture romaine, à certains égards comme une surenchère d'élégance qui plaît au lettré, mais ne saurait en aucun cas suppléer la tradition latine' (Goldlust 2010, p. 137).

difficult to determine what role Ovid played in suggesting names, attitudes and situations. For this reason we have to verify the existence and the extent of references to Ovid on a case-by-case basis, both in the general construction of the passages examined and in the verbal choices, in order to cast light on the way(s) in which Ausonius relates to Ovid.

More than once the same Ovidian episode or character also occurs elsewhere in Ausonius's work. In such cases, we will compare the references against each other as well as with their original context. It is well known that Ausonius normally intertwines different echoes and references from different passages and authors. As the literary sources and hypotexts of the *Cupido cruciatus* have already been investigated and discussed by previous scholars, there would be no point in examining them systematically once again. Therefore I will not take them into account, unless there is something that could prove important for my purpose.¹⁶

Ovid's presence in the *Cupido cruciatus* will be considered from two different perspectives.¹⁷ On the one hand I will analyse the techniques of the poet and on the other I shall consider 'the central importance of the reader within the textual world of late antiquity'.¹⁸ Ausonius the professor and poet, with his extended literary knowledge, addressed an audience which could not meet the definition of the ideal reader able to analyse every suggestion or even catch every literary reference present in the text: the actual readers of his time certainly had to be learned, but it is quite probable that the large majority of them were

¹⁶ The other literary references, which I do not discuss, are normally indicated in their commentaries by Green 1991 and more exhaustively by Franzoi 2002. See also the important paper by Mondin 2005. Among the previous contributions I would like to point out as particularly useful Lucifora 1979 and Vanucci 1989. Schenkl 1883 and Green 1977 give useful indications on the echoes of the Latin poets in Ausonius's poetical work.

¹⁷ On the different perspectives from which a text and its relationships with the literary tradition could and can be examined see the interesting remarks by Kaufmann 2016.

¹⁸ I am quoting Peltari 2014, p. 2, whose observations on allusivity, intertextuality and the presence of the reader are an important contribution to a better understanding of the making of poetry and to its reception in Latin late antiquity.

not as learned as he was.¹⁹ This is the reason why we have to wonder whether readers who were knowledgeable but who – unlike us – had no indexes or database and had to rely only on their own memory could easily detect every Ovidian echo or reference.

The Flowers

Flowers, which bear names that once belonged to kings and boys (*regum et puerorum nomina*)²⁰ whose deaths were being mourned, languish in the murky light along the banks of the silent rivers (*sine murmure rivos*) that cross the *aerei campi* (ll. 8-12):

Quorum per ripas nebuloso lumine marcent
fleti, olim regum et puerorum nomina, flores:
mirator Narcissus et Oebalides Hyacinthus
et Crocus auricomans et murice pictus Adonis
et tragico scriptus gemitu Salaminus Aeas.

All these flowers are the result of a transformation which in four of five cases is connected with love. All these metamorphoses are described by Ovid, but they are also witnessed by other writers. In the case of Narcissus,²¹ the only complete and detailed account of the story in Latin literature is provided by Ovid *met.* III. 339-510. This narrative is well known to Ausonius, who refers to it in three epigrams, which develop three different motifs prompted by Ovid's treatment of this myth.²² *Epigr.* 108 plays on the motif of the impossible love that Narcissus bears

¹⁹ Ausonius dedicated his poem to Proculus Gregorius, who was a learned man and also the dedicatee of *praef.* 5 (see Mattiacci 2013, pp. 54-60) and *fast.* 4 (see Franzoi 2002, pp. 17-18; Sivan 1992, pp. 96-97). Proculus, however, was not the only expected reader of the *Cupido cruciatus*. The schoolbook of probably Gallic origin published by Dionisotti 1982 is interesting evidence on the authors actually read in a late antique school.

²⁰ Cf. Verg. *ecl.* 3. 106-107 *dic quibus in terris inscripti nomina regum / nascantur flores*: cf. Santini 2002, pp. 252-253.

²¹ For general information on the myth of Narcissus cf. 'Narkissos' in Roscher III/1, cols 10-16 (Greve): on Narcissus in Ovid col. 11; RE XVI. 2, 'Narkissos', cols 1721-1729 (Eitrem): on Ovid cols 1724-1725.

²² The three epigrams are analysed by Silvia Mattiacci in this same volume, pp. 69-74. Narcissus's myth is also alluded to by Ausonius in *technop.* 10. 2 (*flore alio reus est Narcissi morte sacer fons*).

for himself,²³ *epigr.* 109 is one distic which comments upon the attractiveness of Narcissus, so great that even he was a victim of his own beauty; ²⁴ *epigr.* 110 is on Echo, whose story is intermingled with that of Narcissus in the *Metamorphoses*.

In our poem Ausonius defines Narcissus only as *mirator*, a term which recalls the event that provoked his death and subsequent metamorphosis. In his narrative Ovid makes a point of the unhealthiness of the young man's love; he was unable to resist the desire of gazing at himself even after his death (*met.* III. 504-505 *Tum quoque se, postquam est inferna sede receptus, / in Stygia spectabat aqua*). Ovid describes Narcissus's attitude using *miror* / *mirabilis* in *met.* III. 424, where he comments on the reaction of Narcissus, who fell in love with his own image after seeing it for the first time (*met.* III. 420-424 *Spectat humi positus geminum, sua lumina, sidus / Et dignos Baccho, dignos et Apolline crines / Inpubesque genas et eburnea colla decusque / Oris et in niueo mixtum candore ruborem / Cunctaque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse*) and in *met.* III. 503, which describes Narcissus's behaviour at the very moment of his death: *lumina mors clausit domini mirantia formam*. The choice of *mirator* may have been suggested – I think – by Ovid, especially considering that he is the only one among Ausonius's possible sources who employs *miror* and its derivatives for Narcissus.²⁵ As for the readers, although they would have been able to find Narcissus's metamorphosis in a mythology handbook,²⁶ it is very

²³ *Epigr.* 108 *Si cuperes alium, posses, Narcisse, potiri; / Nunc tibi amoris adest copia, fructus abest*, for which cf. *met.* III. 466 *quod cupio, mecum est: inopem me copia fecit*.

²⁴ *Epigr.* 109 *Quid non ex huius forma pateretur amator, / ipse suam qui sic deperit effigiem?*

²⁵ *Miror* and its derivatives are absent from *Culex* 408-409 (*non illinc narcissus abest, cui gloria formae / igne Cupidino proprios exarsit in artus*); *Stat. silv.* I. 5. 55 (*hic te perspicuum melius, Narcisse, videres*), and *Theb.* VII. 340-342 (*tu quoque praeclarum forma, Cephise, dedisses / Narcissum, sed Thespiacis iam pallet in agris / trux puer; orbata florem, pater, adluis unda*); *Hyg. fab.* 271 (*qui ephebi formosissimi fuerunt*). 2 (*Narcissus Cephisii fluminis filius qui se ipsum amauit*); *Ps. Lact. Plac., fab. Ov.* III. 6; *AL* 39, 145-147; 265 and 266 (Pentadius). *AL* 9, which has *miratur* at l. 12 should be later than Ausonius (it is dated to the fifth century CE) and is heavily influenced by Ovid: cf. Tronchet 2010; Galli 2014, pp. 14-15.

²⁶ On the mythological handbooks of Latin late antiquity see Cameron 2004.

probable that they were reminded of Ovid, who was the most read poet after Virgil in late antiquity. However, only those who remembered the episode by heart would also have been able to appreciate Ausonius's use of *mirator*.

One last remark: Ausonius' two epigrams play on the love inspired and felt by Narcissus and on the impossibility of the fulfilment of his desire, but do not allude to his metamorphosis, which is, by contrast, the reason Narcissus is mentioned in the *Cupido cruciatus*. So Ausonius refers to the same Ovidian episode in two different ways according to the different genres of the works where Narcissus is mentioned.

The second part of l. 10 contains the mention of Hyacinthus, qualified by the patronimic *Oebalides*, which shows Ausonius in agreement with the version of Hyacinthus's myth normally accepted by the Latin authors.²⁷ Unlike *Oebalius*, which is more frequent in Latin, *Oebalides* is rather rare; it occurs six times in Latin poetry before Ausonius and it is used to refer to Hyacinthus twice by Ovid and once by Statius. The latter recalls Hyacinthus as the ephebe loved by Apollo, while the former uses the adjective in connection with his tragic death in *Ib.* 586 (ll. 585-586 *Aera si misso vacuum iaculabere disco, / quo puer Oebalides ictus ab orbe cadas*) and in *met.* x. 196, where it is employed in the apostrophe Apollo addresses to his beloved youth, whom he has accidentally killed (*Laberis, Oebalide, prima fraudate iuuenta*). *Oebalides* in Ausonius's poem very probably echoes this last passage, which preludes Hyacinthus's transformation into a flower.

In the Hyacinthus episode, the god closes his apostrophe to the youth not only with the announcement of the metamorphosis he will undergo (*met.* x. 206 *Flosque novus scripto gemitus imitabere nostros*), but also with the prophecy that one day the letters inscribed in the flower will also indicate the name of a glorious hero (ll. 207-208 *Tempus et illud erit, quo se fortis*

²⁷ In Ovid as well, Hyacinthus descended from Cēebalus, as he does in Stat. *silv.* II. 1. 112 (*Oebaliden illo praeceps mutaret Apollo*) and Hyg. *fab.* 271. 1 (*Hyacinthus Oebali filius*). According to some Greek sources, however, he was the son of Pieros and Kleio or of Amyklas (accepted in Latin by Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab. Ov.* x. 5 *Hyacinthus Amyclae*) and the nymph Diomedē: see 'Hyakinthos', in Roscher I. 2, cols 2759-2760 (Roscher); Maggiali 1985.

simus heros / Addat in hunc florem folioque legatur eodem). In so doing, Ovid connects the two myths related to the origin of the hyacinth which, according to another aetiology, had its origin in the blood of the suicide of Ajax.²⁸ This second aetiology is related in *met.* XIII, where the transformation of Ajax's blood concludes the episode of *armorum iudicium*. Ovid connects the two myths in this second passage too, asserting that from Ajax's blood the earth engenders the same flower born from the wound of Hyacinthus (*met.* XIII. 394-396 *rubefactaque sanguine tellus / Purpureum uiridi genuit de caespite florem, / qui prius Oebalio fuerat de uulnere natus*) and affirms that the letters (AI) written on the petals refer to both Hyacinthus and Ajax (*met.* XIII. 397-398 *Littera communis mediis pueroque uiroque / Inscripta est foliis, haec nominis, illa querellae*).

Ausonius follows the first version in the *technopaegnion*, which recalls the transformation of Hyacinthus effected by Apollo to console himself for his loss,²⁹ while he adopts the second one in the epitaph of the hero,³⁰ in which, however, the letters inscribed on the petals do not indicate the name of Ajax (as in Ovid), but the grief for the injustice he had suffered. In *Cupido cruciatus* the two versions are both present, at lines 10 and 12, but Ausonius gives no name to the flower born out of the blood of Ajax and evoking his tragic death (l. 12 *et tragico scriptus gemitu Salaminus Aeas*), and places it at the end of the list, as if it was not the same hyacinth into which the youth loved by Apollo was transformed (l. 10). In this way, the poet follows his preference for building on images by evoking the two different episodes of the *Metamorphoses* related to the origin of the hyacinth, but at the same time he introduces a variation by speaking of two different flowers and not, as Ovid does, of the same flower.³¹

²⁸ Cf. 'Aias I. Der Telamonier', in Roscher I.1, pp. 115-133 (Fleischer): on the red flower born from his blood cf. p. 131. See also Plin. *nat.* XXI. 38. 66 *Hyacinthum comitatur fabula duplex, luctum praeferens eius quem Apollo dilexerat, aut ex Aiakis cruore editum*.

²⁹ *Technop.* 10. 1 *solamen tibi, Phoebe, novum dedit Oebalius flos*.

³⁰ *Epitaph.* 3. 5-6 *Iam dabo purpureum claro de sanguine florem, / testantem gemitu crimina iudicii*.

³¹ Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab. Ov.* XIII. 1 *ex cuius cruore flos purpureus similis hyacinthi natus est*. On the different flowers corresponding to the name of Hyacinthus see André 1956, p. 165 ('hyacinthus').

We have little information on Crocus, but we know his story in two different versions, attested before Ausonius.³² According to Galenus this flower was born out of the blood of Crocus, a youth who was accidentally killed by a disc while playing with Hermes.³³ The other version goes back to Ovid, who briefly records the transformation of Crocus and his partner Smilax into flowers in *met.* IV. 283-284 (*et Crocon in parvos verum cum Smilace flores / praetereo*)³⁴ and mentions him in *fast.* v. 227. This line belongs to a passage (v. 223-228) in which Crocus is placed after Hyacinthus and Narcissus and before Attis and Adonis. Ausonius does not allude to the circumstances of Crocus's metamorphosis and simply qualifies the flower as *auricomans*, that is a *hapax*. Since, with the exception of Attis, the flowers mentioned in *fast.* v. 223-228 are the same ones we find in the *Cupido cruciatus*, it is possible that Ausonius took inspiration from Ovid while nonetheless marking his distance from him by not quoting Attis, but we cannot exclude the possible influence of a mythographic handbook listing all the cases of ephebes transformed in flowers.³⁵

The birth of the anemone from the blood of the dying Adonis is treated in Latin poetry by Ovid (*met.* x. 731-739), who does not actually give the name of the flower, but recalls its etymology from ἀνεμος (x. 739 *excutiunt idem qui praestant nomina venti*).³⁶ Ausonius accepts this mythographic version³⁷ without mentioning the name of the flower. The reader would have to know Ovid's narrative to recognize which flower is alluded to, unless he could find this information in a lost catalogue.³⁸

³² See 'Krokos', Roscher II. 1, col. 1450 (Stoll); 'Krokos' RE XI. 2, cols 1972-1973 (Scherling).

³³ *De comp. medic. sec. loc.* I. 4, vol. XIII, ed. Kühn, p. 269.

³⁴ On Smilax's transformation see also Plin. *nat.* XVI. 154 *virgine eius nominis propter amorem iuvenis Croci mutata in hunc fruticem*; Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab. Ov.* IV. 10.

³⁵ If so, Ausonius's source cannot be Hyginus, for Crocus is absent from his list in *fab.* 271.

³⁶ On Adonis's myth see 'Adonis' in Roscher I. 1, cols 69-73 (Roscher).

³⁷ According to the version offered by Bion I. 66, roses grew from Adonis's blood, while Aphrodite's tears were transformed into anemones: see Roscher I. 1, col. 72.

³⁸ As far as we can know, Ovid seems to be the only one to have said that the anemone was the flower into which Adonis's blood was transformed: this metamorphosis is not recorded by Hyginus, while Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab. Ov.* x. 12 only speaks of a purple flower (*cujus cruor ... in florem purpurei coloris conversus est*).

Yet this knowledge was not necessary to understand this line of *Cupido cruciatus*. While in our poem Ausonius makes no explicit reference to the episode recounted in the *Metamorphoses*, in *epigr.* 53. 7, which compares the *delicatus* Glaucias to Adonis (*Verum aut Persephoniae Cinyreius ibis Adonis*), there is a very probable verbal echo of Ovid, because the patronymic *Cinyreius*, which occurs for the first time in Ovid, is used to refer to Adonis only in two passages of the *Metamorphoses*.³⁹ In *epigr.* 53. 7, however, Ausonius does not allude to the metamorphosis of Adonis's blood, but he hints to another aspect of this rich and multifarious legend: Persephone's love for him, which is absent from the *Metamorphoses* but alluded to in *Cupido cruciatus* at ll. 57-58.⁴⁰

The Heroines

Ausonius' *aeris campi* are more crowded than the *lugentes campi* of Virgil. Next to the Virgilian heroines there are other characters, who are all present in Ovid,⁴¹ but can also be found elsewhere.

The first heroine we meet is Semele (ll. 16-18):

Fulmineos Semele decepta puerpera partus
deflet et ambustas lacerans per inania cunas
ventilat ignavum simulati fulguris ignem.

For Semele, who is absent in Virgil, Ausonius takes inspiration from Propertius III. 28, who places her among the heroines who were rewarded with immortality after death and describes

³⁹ *Met.* x. 712 (*iuuenis Cinyreius*) and 730 (*Cinyreius heros*).

⁴⁰ *Cruciaverat illic / spreta olim memorem Veneris Proserpina Adonin*. On Proserpina's love for Adonis see cf. Roscher I. 1, cols 70 and 72; on her competition with Venus cf. col. 70; Fauth 1974, p. 56 and n. 99.

⁴¹ The heroines seen by Odysseus in Hom. *Od.* xi. 321-326 include Phaedra, Procris, Ariadne (l. 321) and Eriphyla (l. 326), who are also present in the *Cupido cruciatus*. As three out of those four heroines are in Virgil, Ausonius's dependence from the *nekyia* is not certain, partly because the *Cupido cruciatus* has none of the first eight heroines Odysseus speaks to. Even if Ausonius knew this Homeric passage, it is nonetheless impossible to prove its influence on the *Cupido cruciatus* and consequently to affirm that 'da Omero Ausonio assume ... il rapporto partecipativo' (Santini 2002, p. 252).

Cynthia speaking with her on the dangers to which a beautiful woman is exposed.⁴² But it is Ovid who in *met.* III. 259-317 relates the vicissitudes of Semele alluded to in these lines.⁴³ Ovid's narrative does not tell what happened to Semele after her death but goes on to describe the salvation and survival of Bacchus.⁴⁴ Ausonius fills this gap, representing the feelings of the heroine, deceived by Juno and, because of the thunderbolt, denied the chance for a normal delivery of her baby.⁴⁵ Finally, the use of the adjective *fulmineus* seems to be suggested by Statius *Theb.* x. 424 *fulminei per vos cunabula Bacchi*.⁴⁶

The next heroine is Caenis, who is already present in *Aen.* VI. 448-449:

et iuvenis quondam, nunc femina Caeneus,
rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram

Caeneus was once a woman. She was violated by Neptunus, who then granted her wish to become a man and made her

⁴² Prop. III. 28. 27-28 *narrabis Semelae, quo sis formosa periclo, / credet et illa, suo docta puella malo*.

⁴³ On the myth of Semele cf. 'Semele', in Roscher IV, cols 662-675 (Jessen) and RE II A/2, 'Semele', I. 1343-1345 (Keune). Ovid follows the Theban version of the myth (see Roscher IV, cols 669-671), which was the most widespread in Greek literature and is also given by Hyg. *fab.* 167 and 179.

⁴⁴ *Met.* III. 308-312 *corpus mortale tumultus / Non tulit aethrios donisque iugalibus arsit. / Imperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo / eripitur patrioque tener, si credere dignum est, / insuitur femori maternaque tempora complet*: cf. Ps. Lact. Plac. *fab.* Ov. III. 3 (*deus instructus tonitribus ac fulminibus, domum Semeles ingressus est: tecta ejus deceptae optatis flammis adurit Liberumque conceptum utero gravidae incendio eripit, ac femore insuit suo*), who strictly adheres to Ovid's narration: if the *narrationes* are earlier than Ausonius, as argued by Cameron 2004, readers could find there the Semele story as it is told by Ovid. Therefore they would not have needed to know (or remember) the *Metamorphoses*.

⁴⁵ *Decepta* certainly alludes to Juno's action: cf. Green 1991 *ad loc.* and Franzoi 2002, p. 65 at ll. 16-17, who recalls *silv.* II. 1. 97 *deceptaque funera matris*, following Lucifora 1979, pp. 266-267. Here, however, it is possible that by *decepta* the poet hints also to Semele's deception as a *puerpera* who could not enjoy her motherhood because of the thunderbolt (cf. l. 17 *ambustas lacerans ... cunas*, where *cunas* has to be interpreted as indicating Semele's womb: cf. Green 1991 and Franzoi 2002 *ad loc.*). *Decepta* is referred to Semele also by Ps. Lact. Plac. *fab.* Ov. III. 3.

⁴⁶ Cf. Green 1991 *ad loc.* Cf. also *Theb.* III. 183-185 *ueteris cum regia Cadmi / fulmineum in cinerem monitis Iunonis iniquae / consedit*, which refers to the effects of Jupiter's visit with the thunder to the pregnant Semele.

invulnerable.⁴⁷ According to the version of the myth present in Virgil, she returned to her original sex before her death, while according to Ovid (*met.* XII. 189-209 and 459-526) she remained a man and died as such. Ausonius explicitly mentions Ovid in *epigr.* 72,⁴⁸ but here follows Virgil's version, according to the needs of the plot (ll. 19-20):

Irrita dona querens, sexu gavisa virili,
maeret in antiquam Caenis revocata figuram.

Virgil gives information only on Caenis' double sex change, without speaking of her feelings after turning back into a woman. Ausonius echoes *Aen.* VI. 449 at l. 20 with two lexical variations (*in antiquam* ~ *in veterem*; *revocata figuram* ~ *revoluta figuram*),⁴⁹ but underlines her present unhappiness by *maeret* and *irrita dona querens* at l. 19. This insistence on Caenis's grief, deriving from the regret of her past happiness as a man (*sexu gavisa virili*), can be explained by Caenis's experience in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which represent Caeneus enjoying his transformation into a man (*met.* XII. 208-209 *munere laetus abit studisque virilibus aevum / exigit*). *Irrita dona querens* could refer both to the invulnerability and to the change to the male sex, because the two gifts did not prevent (at least in the version proposed by Ausonius) her return to the female sex and her death.⁵⁰ According to Gellius, the story of Caenis's change to the male sex was rather widespread among the ancient poets.⁵¹ Therefore, Ausonius's readers could have found it somewhere else, although Virgil and Ovid remain

⁴⁷ Cf. Ps. Lact. Plac. *fab. Ov.* XII. 4. On Caenis see 'Kaineus' in Roscher II, 1, cols 894-897 (Seeliger); on his change of sex see RE x. 2, 'Kaineus', cols 1504-1505 (Heckenbach); Gargiulo 1984. Only Vergil and Servius record his final return to the female sex: cf. Roscher II. 1, col. 896; RE x. 2, col. 1505. Caenis's change of sex and invulnerability are rejected as incredible by Hyg. *fab.* 14. 4.

⁴⁸ *Epigr.* 72, 8-9 *an vos Nasonis carmina non legitis? / Caenida convertit proles Saturnia Consus*: on this epigram cf. Mattiacci in this volume, pp. 49-52.

⁴⁹ For *revocata* instead of *revoluta* we cannot exclude the possibility that Ausonius read it in his text of Virgil, since *revocata* is the *varia lectio* transmitted by R: cf. Green 1991, p. 529 *ad loc.* On the possible reasons for Caenis's and Eriphyle's inclusion among the victims of love in *Aen.* VI see Norden 1976⁶, p. 251; Venini 1985 and Rocca 1988.

⁵⁰ Cf. Santini 2002, pp. 253-254.

⁵¹ Gell. IX. 4. 14 (*notissima illa veterum poetarum de Caenide et Caeneo cantilena*), who quotes Plin. *nat.* VII. 36 on the changes of sex.

the most likely texts to be read and remembered. Nevertheless, an audience familiar with Ovid's narrative could also have noticed another important difference from the *Metamorphoses*, where Caeneus, apart from his remaining a man to the end, instead of dying, becomes a bird with red feathers (*met.* XII. 524-525 *fulvis /... avem pennis*).

After Caenis, Ausonius describes Procris,⁵² of whom Virgil *Aen.* VI. 445 mentions only the name (ll. 21-22):

Vulnera siccant adhuc Procris Cephalique cruentam
diliget et percussa manum.

The story of Procris is told by Ovid in *met.* VII. 796-862 and in *ars* III. 687-746, where it is a warning against the potential harm in being too quick to believe in the existence of a rival. The behaviour Ausonius attributes to Procris at the moment of her death recalls that of the dying Procris in *ars* III. 737-742:⁵³

'Ei mihi!' conclamat 'fixisti pectus amicum:
Hic locus a Cephalo vulnera semper habet.
Ante diem morior, sed nulla paelice laesa:
Hoc faciet positae te mihi, terra, levem.
Nomine suspectas iam spiritus exit in auras:
Labor, io! cara lumina conde manu!'

Diligit manum of *Cupido cruciatus* 22 develops the meaning of *cara manu* (*ars* III. 742), but while Ovid underlines her relief in knowing her husband was faithful, Ausonius underscores Procris's love for Cephalus even after he has unknowingly struck her.

After Procris, Ausonius introduces two Ovidian characters, Hero and Sappho, who are the protagonists of Ovid *her.* 19 and 15 (ll. 22-24):

Fert fumida testae
lumina Sestiaca praeceps de turre puella.
Et de nimbo saltum Leucate minatur

⁵² On Procris see Rocca 1988; RE xxiii. 1, 'Prokris', cols 600-609 (Radke).

⁵³ In the *Metamorphoses* the dying Procris begs Cephalus not to marry Aura after her death (l. 856). Neither Hyg. *fab.* 189, nor Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab. Ov.* VII. 29 say anything regarding either the attitude and feelings of the dying Procris or Cephalus's reaction after wounding her.

With *Sestiaca praeceps de turre puella*, Ausonius identifies Hero and at the same time gives information on the way she died. In her letter to Leander, the heroine, who is still hoping he will return, describes herself placing a lamp at the top of a tower in the evening to show him the way⁵⁴ and writing her letter close to the lamp.⁵⁵ The image of the smoking earthen lamp (*fumida testae lumina*) seems to be a variation by Ausonius, who combines and modifies two different Virgilian descriptions.⁵⁶

The description of Sappho is not complete, for a line is missing after l. 24. As Sappho was not a mythical heroine but a Greek poetess, her presence in the *aerei campi* is certainly due to her inclusion in the *epistulae heroidum*. This explanation is confirmed by an epigram of Ausonius where she is in the company of Phaedra, Dido, Canace and Phyllis, who are associated with her only in the *epistulae heroidum*.⁵⁷ In this epigram Sappho is called *fastidita Phaoni* (l. 13) and has committed suicide along with her companions.⁵⁸ Ausonius describes Sappho threatening to leap from the cloud-enshrouded rock of Leucas.⁵⁹ The use of *minatur* implies a declared suicidal intention, while in Ovid's *her.* 15 she does not properly threaten to commit suicide: in her ambiguous words death is considered only a possible consequence of jumping from the rock.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Ov. *her.* 19. 33-36 *Sic ubi lux actast et noctis amior hora / exhibuit pulso sidera clara die, / protinus in summo vigilantia lumina tecto / Ponimus, adsuetae signa notamque viae.* On Hero see RE VIII. 1, 'Hero', cols 909-916 (Sittig); Malcovati 1985.

⁵⁵ Ov. *her.* 19. 151 *Sternuit et lumen, (posito nam scribimus illo); 195 iam dormitante lucerna.* Ausonius's portrait of Hero could also have been influenced by her representation on the cloak given to Admetus by Adrastus in *Theb.* VI. 546-547 *contra autem frustra sedet anxia turre suprema / Sestias in speculis, moritur prope conscius ignis.*

⁵⁶ Franzoi 2002, p. 70 *ad loc.* recalls Virgil *Aen.* IX. 75-76 *piceum fert fumida lumen / taeda and georg.* I. 391-392 *testa cum ardente viderent / scintillare oleum.* The iconography offers representations of Hero on the roof of a tower holding an earthen lamp, but this is mostly seen on coins (cf. LIMC VIII. 1, 'Hero et Leander', pp. 619-623, by Anneliese Kossatz-Deissmann, p. 621, C. 10; E. 15-20; p. 622, F. 23, 25) and it is impossible to prove that Ausonius did indeed know of it.

⁵⁷ Auson. *epigr.* 103. 12-13: see Malcovati 1966, p. 29; Mattiacci in this volume, pp. 62-63. Ausonius mentions her as a poetess in *epigr.* 35. 1 and *epist.* 13. 91.

⁵⁸ Auson. *epigr.* 103, 12-13: cf. Kay 2001 *ad loc.*

⁵⁹ For this image Lucifora 1979, p. 267 recalls Verg. *Aen.* III. 274 *Leucatae nimboса cacumina montis.*

⁶⁰ *Her.* 15. 189-190 *An potes, o scopulis undaque ferocior omni, / Si moriar,*

With Eriphyle we come back to Virgil (*Aen.* vi. 445-446):

maestamque Eryphilen
crudelis nati mostrantem volnera cernit

It is difficult to understand why Virgil placed the *auri cupida* Eryphile among the victims of love; according to the most widespread variant of her myth, she was guilty of the death of her husband Amphiarus by revealing his hiding place to Polynices in exchange for the necklace of Harmonia.⁶¹ Virgil qualifies her as *maestam*, while in *Od.* xi. 326 she is *στυγερή*. Ausonius keeps faithful to Virgil, inheriting from him both the character of Eryphile and the adjectiv *maesta*, which expresses compassion for her (ll. 26-27):⁶²

Harmoniae cultus Eriphyle maesta recusat,
infelix nato nec fortunata marito.

Unlike Virgil, however, Ausonius also mentions the reward she obtained (*Harmoniae cultus*) for her betrayal of Amphiarus and represents her as now refusing (*recusat*) the fatal gift she had once accepted. In addition to Eriphyle's punishment by her son, Ausonius recalls her unfortunate marriage (*nec fortunata marito*), adopting the same compassionate attitude expressed by the adjective *crudelis* in Virgil. In so doing he detaches himself from the elegiac treatment of this character, for Eryphile was mentioned as a negative *exemplum* by Propertius as well as by Ovid.⁶³

titulum mortis habere meae? and the ambiguous conclusion, v. 220 *Vt mihi Leucadiae fata petantur aquae*. In *am.* ii. 18. 34 (*dat votam Phaebo Lesbis amata lyram*) Ovid says that the poet Sabinus, his friend, let her survive. The text of *Stat. silv.* v. 3. 154-155, recalled by Lucifora 1979, p. 267, if we accept Politianus's conjecture *Leucade* instead of the transmitted *Calchide* (*saltusque ingressa viriles / non formidata temeraria Leucade Sappho*), does not affirm that the poetess committed suicide.

⁶¹ On Eriphyle cf. 'Eriphyle', in Roscher i. 1, cols 1336-1337 (Stoll); RE vi. 1, 'Eriphyle', cols 460-463 (Bethe) and Venini 1985. This is the version accepted by *Stat. Theb.* iv. 187-213 (193-194 *sed perfida coniunx / dona viro mutare velit*). A slightly different version is offered by Hyg. *fab.* 73. 2, who says that Eryphile, *auri cupida*, betrayed her husband because Adrastus bribed her with a necklace made for this purpose. On the reasons for her presence among the victims of love in *Aen.* vi, see Venini 1985.

⁶² Austin 1977, p. 160 *ad loc.* 'Virgil's *maestam*, applied to her especially, is significant of his compassion'.

⁶³ Prop. iii. 13. 57-58. *Tu quoque ut auratos gereres, Eriphyla, lacertos, / dilapsis*

The mention of Eriphyle is followed by that of Pasiphaë with her daughters Ariadne and Phaedra (ll. 28-34):

Tota quoque aeriae Minoia fabula Cretae
picturarum instar tenui sub imagine vibrat:
Pasiphae nivei sequitur vestigia tauri, 30
Licia fert glomerata manu deserta Ariadne.
Respicit abiectas desperans Phaedra tabellas.
Haec laqueum gerit, haec vanae simulacra coronae:
Daedaliae pudet hanc latebras subiisse iuvencae.

Virgil mentions only Phaedra (*Aen.* vi. 445 *his Phaedram Procrinque locis maestamque Eriphylen*) and Pasiphaë (*Aen.* vi. 447 *Euadnenque et Pasiphaen*), but without establishing any special link between them. Ausonius, on the other hand, puts together all the women of Minos's family, adding Phaedra's older sister Ariadna and introducing them in order of age, first from the eldest to the youngest (ll. 30-32) and then from the youngest to the eldest (ll. 33-34). In her letter to Hippolytus, the Ovidian Phaedra justifies her incestuous passion through the fact of her ineluctable tendency to perverse love, which all the women in her family share.⁶⁴ Readers, however, might notice and understand the similarity even without a reference to the passage of Phaedra's letter.

Apart from the *campi lugentes*, where she is only mentioned by name, Pasiphaë and her insane love are recalled by Virgil *Aen.* vi. 24-25 (*hic crudelis amor tauri, suppositaque furto / Pasiphae*) and in *ecl.* 6. 46 (*Pasiphaen niuei solatur amore iuuenci*), which is echoed by Ausonius at l. 30, *Pasiphae nivei*

nusquam est Amphiarauis equis. Her punishment is recalled as an *exemplum* of the consequences of the love for gifts by Prop. ii. 16. 29 *Aspice quid donis Eriphyla inuenit amaris*. Ov. *ars* iii. 13-14 *Si scelere Oeclides Talaioniae Eriphylae / viuus et in uiuis ad Styga uenit equis; am.* i. 10. 51-52 *E quibus exierat traiecit viscera ferro / filius et poenae causa monile fuit*.

⁶⁴ Ov. *her.* 4. 53-62 *Forsitan hunc generis fato reddamus amorem, / Et Venus ex tota gente tributa petat. / Iuppiter Europen (primast ea gentis origo) / Dilexit, tauro dissimulante deum; / Pasiphae mater, decepto subdita tauro, / Enixast utero crimen onusque suo; / Perfidus Aegides, ducentia fila secutus, / Curva meae fugit tecta sororis ope. / En, ego nunc, ne forte parum Minoia credar, / In socios leges ultima gentis eo*, where Phaedra declares that perverse loves are ineluctable for the women of her family. The tendency of the *Minoides* to love against nature is underlined by Phaedra also in Sen. *Phaedr.* 124-128: see Franzoi 2002, p. 75 ad l. 28.

sequitur vestigia tauri. For the final part of this line, Val. Flacc. *Argon.* VIII. 266 *Iuppiter aut falsi sequimur uestigia tauri* has been recalled, which speaks about Europa (Minos's mother) mating with Zeus in the form of a bull,⁶⁵ but in my opinion we cannot exclude the echo of two Ovidian verses which, by contrast, are related to the story of Pasiphaë's love, *ars* I. 295 *Pasiphae fieri gaudebat adultera tauri* and *her.* 4. 57 *Pasiphae mater, decepto subdita tauro*.⁶⁶ Ausonius focuses on the behaviour of the queen, following the *vestigia* not of a *iuvencus* as in Virgil *ecl.* 6. 46, but of a bull, as in Ovid and in some iconographical representations.⁶⁷

As for Ariadne, Virgil, who recalls her love for Theseus (together with that of Pasiphaë for the bull) in the *ekphrasis* of the door of Apollo's temple at Cuma (*Aen.* VI. 24-30), does not place her in the *lugentes campi*, perhaps because she was eventually rescued by Dionysos and became his wife and a goddess.⁶⁸ Ausonius, on the other hand, offers two different pictures of her: in the former she is portrayed with a ball of twine in her hand after being abandoned by Theseus, while in the latter she wears the semblance of an empty crown. The two lines of the *Cupido cruciatus* on Ariadne, whose representation is very probably influenced by her iconography,⁶⁹ offers the reader plenty of literary references. These range from Catullus's *carm.* 64

⁶⁵ Lucifora 1979, p. 267 and after her Franzoi 2002, p. 77.

⁶⁶ See also Sil. *Pun.* XIV. 568 *Ardet et Europe nivei sub imagine tauri* and *AL* 14. 3 *Europam nivei solatur amore iuveni* quoted by Franzoi 2002, pp. 76-77.

⁶⁷ On Pasiphaë as the lover of a bull in Ovid see also *met.* VIII. 136 and IX. 735-740; *rem.* 63; *fast.* III. 499. For iconographical representations of Pasiphaë's love cf. LIMC VII. 1, 'Pasiphae' (John K. Papadopoulos), pp. 193-200 and particularly the wall painting from the villa from the second / third century CE near Tor Marancia, where she leans against the bull (*ibidem*, p. 194, A. 1).

⁶⁸ She is immortal since Hesiod. *th.* 947-949. On Ariadne cf. 'Ariadne', in Roscher I. 1 cols 540-546 (Stoll); RE II. 1 'Ariadne', cols 803-810 (Wagner); Hyg. *fab* 42 (Ariadne's love for Theseus and the killing of the Minotaurus) and 43 (Ariadne abandoned by Theseus, who later marries her sister Phaedra).

⁶⁹ For iconographical representations of Ariadne with a ball of thread in her hand and handing it to Theseus see LIMC III. 1, 'Ariadne' (Marie-Louise Bernhard), pp. 1052-1053, B. 4-9. The last of these is particularly interesting because it is a mosaic from the end of the third century CE found near Salzburg, and thus witnesses the success of Ariadne's myth in late antiquity. For images of Ariadne wearing a crown cf. LIMC III. 1 'Dionysos' (Carlo Gasparri), p. 485, 4. a), 736 and 738.

to Ovid, who is the author of the letter written by Ariadne to Theseus (*her.* 10), and who dedicates one section of his *Fasti* to the catasterism of Ariadne's *corona*.⁷⁰ The crown she wears in Ausonius could remind a learned reader of this Ovidian passage. Commenting on Ausonius's description, Green suggests that the empty crown 'is the one promised by Theseus (*vanae*), not the one received from Bacchus and later placed in the sky.'⁷¹ Countering this interpretation there is the fact that the adjective *vanus* should refer to the evanescence of the beings and things belonging to the underworld. On the other hand, a reference to the catasterism of the crown, as it alludes to Bacchus, seems unfitting for the image of Ariadne as a victim of Amor. This is one case in which it is difficult to be sure of the right interpretation, and where the reader is called to choose his or her own interpretation.

Phaedra too is in the *lugentes campi*, but Virgil mentions only her name, while Ausonius initially portrays her gazing in deep despair at the *tabellae* containing her proposal rejected by Hippolytus (l. 32) and then wearing a halter (l. 33). The *abiectae tabellae* seem to suppose that Phaedra addressed a letter to Hippolytus confessing her love.⁷² This detail, which could possibly be the result of the influence of the episode of Biblis in the *Metamorphoses*,⁷³ certainly evokes Phaedra's letter to Hippolytus by Ovid (*her.* 4); at the same time it is a fairly widespread iconographic theme.⁷⁴ The halter alludes to the way Phaedra died: here

⁷⁰ *Fast.* III. 459-516, cf. *met.* VIII. 155-182 and Ps. Lact. Plac. *fab. Ov.* VIII. 2.

⁷¹ Green 1991, p. 530 at ll. 33-34.

⁷² I agree with Franzoi 2002, pp. 77-78 *ad loc.* in interpreting *tabellas* as the letter sent by Phaedra to Hippolytus and rejected (*abiectas*) by the latter. On the Phaedra myth see 'Phaidra', in Roscher III. 2, cols 2220-2232 (Ilberg).

⁷³ As proposed by Vannucci 1989, 43 who for l. 32 recalls *met.* ix. 575, where Caenus *proicit acceptas lecta sibi parte tabellas*, a line whose metrical cliché is followed by Ausonius at l. 32.

⁷⁴ Writing tablets, either given to Hippolytus by Phaedra's nurse or rejected by him, are quite present in the figurative representation of this story: see LIMC v. 1, 'Hippolytos I' (Pascale Linant de Bellefonds), pp. 450-452, v C. 40, 43-44 and 54. The representations on late antique sarcophagi are of particular interest for our purpose (LIMC v. 1, pp. 454-455, v C. 73-74; p. 455, v D. 75, p. 456, vi, 86 and 88-89). For scenes of rejected tablets see also LIMC VII. 1 'Phaidra' (Pascale Linant de Bellefonds), p. 357, A. 4-5 and especially B. 13-15, pp. 357-358.

Ausonius assumes that she hanged herself, following the version of *Hippolytus* by Euripides, which is also related by Hyg. *fab.* 47, a version also supported by her iconography.⁷⁵

Lines 35-36 are about Laudamia, who is portrayed alone, while in the *lugentes campi* she is in the company of Evadne and Pasiphaë (*Aen.* vi. 447-448 *Euadnenque et Pasiphaen; his Laodamia / it comes*):

Praereptas queritur per inania gaudia noctes
Laodamia duas, vivi functique mariti

The night of love that Laudamia spent with Protesilaus after his death could remind a learned reader of Propertius i. 19. 7-10:

illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros
non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,
sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis
Thessalus antiquam venerat umbra domum.

Here Propertius identifies himself with Protesilaus, and affirms that his love for Cynthia will last even after his death. Ausonius follows the same version of the myth,⁷⁶ but in *her.* 13 he describes the feelings of Laudamia, who according to Hyginus had convinced the gods to allow her to meet her dead husband for three hours and had not been able to survive without him.⁷⁷ Ausonius is not the first among the Latin poets to dwell on the sentiments of Laodamia: apart from Ovid, Catullus 68. 73-86 had previously evoked her love to Protesilaus and her sorrow upon

⁷⁵ Pausanias x. 29. 3 tells us that in the Lesche of the Cnidians at Delphi Polygnotus had represented Ariadne seated on a rock and looking at her sister Phaedra, who was on a swing grasping the rope on either side in each hand. According to Pausanias this 'attitude, though quite gracefully drawn, makes us infer the manner of Phaedra's death'. In Hyg. *fab.* 47 (*Hippolytus*). 1 Phaedra *se ipsa suspendio necavit*, while Seneca's *Phaedra* commits suicide by stabbing, but after hesitating between stabbing and hanging (cf. l. 259). Also on the fresco of II-III century CE in the Sala delle Nozze Aldobrandine at the Villa of Tor Marancia, Phaedra, who is in the company of Pasiphaë, Scilla, Canace and Myrrha, holds a rolled rope in her hand: cf. LIMC vii. 1, E. 19, p. 358, and for the image LIMC vii. 2, p. 316, fig. 19.

⁷⁶ Cf. Viarre 1987. On the myth of Laudamia and Protesilaus with its variants see Ruiz de Elvira 1991.

⁷⁷ Hyg. *fab.* 103. 2 and 104.

losing him.⁷⁸ But it is Ovid who lets her speak at length to her absent husband in *her.* 13. Ausonius embellishes the simple mention of *Aen.* vi. 447 with other literary suggestions, not exclusively drawn from Laodamia's epistle, where Protesilaus is supposed to be alive and consequently there is no mention of the dead hero coming back to the earth for a second night of love.⁷⁹ It is up to the reader to detect those suggestions, depending on his or her own culture.

After Laodamia, Ausonius describes a group of three fierce heroines holding the swords they used to commit suicide: Thisbe, Canace and Dido (ll. 37-39):

Parte truces alia strictis mucronibus omnes
et Thisbe et Canace et Sidonis horret Elissa:
Coniugis haec, haec patris et haec gerit hospitis ensem.

Thisbe and Canace are not in the *campi lugentes*, but they are both in Ovid's poems. It is in *met.* iv. 55-166 that we find for the first time the version of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe that later circulated in the Latin area.⁸⁰ Its success is already witnessed by some frescoes in Pompeii depicting Thisbe throwing herself on Pyramus's sword or sticking it into her breast.⁸¹ Canace is the writer of a letter to Macareus (Ov. *her.* 11).⁸² Ausonius's

⁷⁸ We could also mention the *Protesilaudamia*, but as it is lost we do not exactly know how Laevius represented the heroine; it is however almost certain that this poem was no longer read at the time of Ausonius.

⁷⁹ *Pont.* iii. 1. 109-110 *Si comes extincti Manes sequerere mariti, / Esset dux facti Laodamia tui.* *Trist.* i. 6. 20 *Aut comes extincto Laodamia uiro.* *Am.* ii. 18. 38 *Et comes extincto Laodamia uiro.* *Her.* 13. 161-162 *Me tibi uenturam comitem, quocumque uocaris, / Siue – quod heu! timeo, siue superstes eris.* According to Vannini 1989, p. 44 'è ipotizzabile che si sia conservata anche l'eco dei vv. 107-108 di *Her.* XIII [...] *aucupor in lecto mendaces caelibe somnos / dum careo veris, gaudia falsa iuvant*' where the heroine is referring to the statue of Protesilaus she had in her bedroom. At l. 35 (*Praeceptas queritur per inania gaudia noctes*) Vannini p. 44, note 22 signals the influence of *met.* xi. 310 (*praereptaue gaudia sumit*). If so, the reference would be limited to those two words, since both the syntax and the context are different.

⁸⁰ Roscher iii. 3, 'Pyramos und Thisbe', cols 3335-3340 (Höfer); RE vi A. 1, 'Thisbe', cols 286-291 (Fiehn); Hyg. *fab.* 242. 5 and 243. 8; Ps. Lact. *Plac. fab.* Ov. iv. 4.

⁸¹ Cf. LIMC vii. 1, p. 606, B. 19-23.

⁸² On Canace see RE x. 2, 'Kanake', cols 1853-1855 (Scherling). Hyg. *fab.* 238. 3, 242. 2, 243. 6. Ovid follows the same version of Euripides's *Aiolos*, as does Servius *Aen.* i. 75; Hyg. *fab.* 238. 3 attributes Canace's death to Aeolus,

choice is very probably inspired by Ovid, who offers a rich and complete treatment of their stories. Yet, since neither includes any verbal Ovidian echoes, the names of these two heroines could have been suggested to Ausonius by a catalogue.⁸³ At any rate, they could remind a learned audience of Ovidian poems.

In the *campi lugentes* Dido has her last, dramatic meeting with Aeneas (*Aen.* vi. 450-476). Ausonius introduces the heroine by her name and origin, as Virgil had done. *Sidonis Elissa* is a lexical variation of Virgil's *Phoenissa Dido* (*Aen.* vi. 450 *Inter quas Phoenissa recens a vulnere Dido*: it is the first verse of the Dido episode, which is thus recalled), where *Sidonis* is the adjective used by Ovid in a brief account of Dido's suicide.⁸⁴ In the *Cupido cruciatur* Dido has lost the preeminent position she had in *Aen.* vi and while Virgil describes her as *recens a vulnere*, Ausonius represents Carthage's queen with the sword of Aeneas (l. 39 *hospitis ense*) in her hand.⁸⁵ If the definition of Aeneas as *hospes* goes back to Virgil,⁸⁶ the association of *hospes* and *ensis* comes from Ovid (*ars* III. 39-40 *tamen hospes et ense / praeuit et causam mortis, Elissa, tuae*),⁸⁷ as does the image of Dido with a drawn blade in her hand (cf. *amores* II. 18. 25 *quodque tenens strictum Dido miserabilis ense*),⁸⁸ as she describes herself in her letter to Aeneas.⁸⁹

who killed her because of her incest, while in *fab.* 243. 6 he lists Canace among the women *quae se ipsae interfecerunt*. On Canace's representation in the Sala delle Nozze Aldobrandine (cf. above, n. 74), see LIMC v. 1, 'Kanakē' (Gratia Berger-Doer), pp. 950-951, 3.

⁸³ For example they are also mentioned by Hyginus together with Dido in a catalogue of women *quae se ipsae interfecerunt*: cf. *fab.* 243. 6 (Canace), 7 (Dido) and 8 (Thisbe).

⁸⁴ Ov. *met.* XIV. 78-81 *excipit Aenean illic animoque domoque / non bene discidium Phrygii latura mariti / Sidonis inque pyra sacri sub imagine facta / incubuit ferro deceptaque decipit omnes*; cf. Green 1991, p. 530 at ll. 37-39.

⁸⁵ On Dido in the *Aeneid* cf. La Penna 1985.

⁸⁶ *Aen.* I. 753; IV. 10 and 323: see Franzoi 2002, p. 83 *ad loc.*

⁸⁷ Signaled by Franzoi 2002 *ibidem*.

⁸⁸ Ovid here alludes to his *epistula* 7 of Dido to Aeneas, where she dictates to Anna her own epitaph mentioning her suicide and the sword of Aeneas she employed in it (ll. 195-196 *praeuit Aeneas et causam mortis et ense; / ipsa sua Dido concidit usa manu*): see Franzoi 2002 *ad loc.* The same epitaph occurs in *fast.* III. 549-550.

⁸⁹ Ov. *her.* 7, 184-186 *Scribimus, et gremio Troicus ensis adest, / perque genas lacrimae strictum labuntur in ense, / qui iam pro lacrimis sanguine tinctus erit.*

Ausonius places one goddess alongside all these mortal-born heroines, the two-horned Luna, who is represented wandering alone, as she used to do when she wooed the sleeping Endymion (ll. 40-42):

Errat et ipsa, olim qualis per Latmia saxa
Endymioneos solita affectare sopores
Cum face et astrigero diademate Luna bicornis.

In this passage, very rich in literary echoes,⁹⁰ there is a *iunctura* that echoes Ovid. It is *Latmia saxa*, which occurs only two times in Latin before Ausonius: in Catull. 66. 5 (*Vt Triuiam furtim sub Latmia saxa relegans*), with no reference to Endymion, and in Ovid *her.* 18. 52 (*Et subeant animo Latmia saxa tuo*). There, Leander refers to him in his invocation to Luna, reminding her of her past love for the handsome shepherd.⁹¹ So this reference to Ovid could be very evocative for a well-read audience able to detect it.

Luna closes the catalogue of heroines, but in a later passage of the *Cupido cruciatus* there is another Ovidian *mulier amatrix*, Myrra,⁹² represented while punishing Amor (ll. 72-74):

Rescindit adultum
Myrrha uterum lacrimis lucentibus inque paudentem
Gemmae fletiferi iaculatur sucina trunci.

Myrrha's attitude recalls how she gave birth in the *Metamorphoses*, when she had already been transformed into a tree. On that occasion her trunk was wet with tears (*met.* x. 509 *Dat gemitus arbor lacrimisque cadentibus umet*) and after Lucina's intervention its bark cracked and let the baby come out (ll. 512-513 *Arbor agit rimas et fixa cortice uiuum / reddit onus, uagitque puer*). This time it is Myrra herself who opens her womb to hurl at Cupido the gems that drop from her trunk. In the

⁹⁰ See Green 1991, pp. 530-531 at ll. 40-42; Franzoi 2002, pp. 84-86. On the affinities between Ausonius's description and Selene's iconography cf. Aiello 2005, pp. 28-30.

⁹¹ Ov. *her.* 18. 61-65 *Hanc ego suspiciens 'faveas, dea candida,' dixi, / 'Et subeant animo Latmia saxa tuo. / Non sinit Endymion te pectoris esse severi; / flecte, precor, vultus ad mea furta tuos! / Tu, dea, mortalem caelo delapsa petebas...'*

⁹² RE III A. 1, 'Smyrna 2', cols 728-730 (Türk).

scene of Cupid's punishment, Myrra is the only one Ausonius mentions by name, apart from Venus, who comes afterwards (ll. 80-94).

In introducing the Myrra episode of the *Metamorphoses* (x. 298-514), Ovid had commented upon her crime against nature (*met.* x. 311-315):

Ipse negat nocuisse tibi sua tela Cupido,
Myrrha, facesque suas a crimine vindicat isto:
Stipite te Stygio tumidisque adflavit echidnis
E tribus una soror. Scelus est odisse parentem;
Hic amor est odio maius scelus.

In Ausonius's poem Myrra 'corrects' Ovid's assertion and makes Cupido responsible for her incestuous love,⁹³ but this correction could be grasped only by a reader who remembers Ovid's text.

Musa Nasonis: *Ovid, Ausonius and his readers*

In his contribution on the 'lusus poetico nella tarda antichità', Antonio La Penna rightly remarked that 'Il paesaggio con cui si apre il *Cupido torturato* proviene tutto dalla letteratura (in questo caso dal VI dell'*Eneide*); tuttavia anche suggestioni semplicemente letterarie possono essere sviluppate con un fascino nuovo', observing that for this and similar passages 'molto [...] utili sono gli accostamenti con Ovidio, che anche lui talvolta, con molta eleganza ma anche con finezza eccezionale di percezioni e di sensibilità, ricorre al gioco delle immagini evanescenti.'⁹⁴ At the end of our enquiry we could add that in the *Cupido cruciatus* Ausonius appears to have learned the talent for developing certain moments or character details from the myth and linking them to each other from the author of the *Metamorphoses* and the *heroides*. Ausonius's ability in performing this task becomes even more evident if we compare the narrative of the *Cupido cruciatus* to the probably later epigram composed by Modesti-

⁹³ This is an attitude Myrrha shares with the other heroines: cf. ll. 63-64 *se quisque absolvere gestit, / transferat ut proprias aliena in crimina culpas*.

⁹⁴ La Penna 1993, quotations from p. 737 and pp. 738-739.

nus on the same topics.⁹⁵ The choice not to treat the subject in an epigram but to develop it in a longer composition (an eclogue, in the words of the author, but we could also call it an epyllion according to our modern definition) proves successful beyond any doubt.

In both the catalogues we have examined, it can be seen that Ausonius drew inspiration from Ovid, whose presence is discernible throughout the *Cupido cruciatus*. In some cases where there are no verbal echoes of Ovid, Ausonius's knowledge of the Ovidian passages involved, which is a rather obvious assumption for a man of his education, is proved by other compositions, and especially by the epigrams, which, like the *Cupido cruciatus*, tend to treat mythology as 'an imaginative space'.⁹⁶ In the epigrams referring to the same myths touched on in the *Cupido*, Ausonius tends to develop a particular point of Ovid's narration and to play on it. Therefore, to fully grasp Ausonius' relationship with his *auctor* it becomes necessary for the reader to know the Ovidian context evoked or commented upon by Ausonius. In the *Cupido cruciatur*, on the other hand, this supplementary knowledge is not necessary for the reader to understand the basic meaning of the text, which can be grasped even without remembering Ovid, simply with the help of a handbook of mythology. Because of this contrasting treatment, which is certainly favoured by the difference in literary genre, the poet is able to make variations on the same theme, although we are not able to establish a chronological succession between the *Cupido cruciatus* and the epigrams.⁹⁷

We have seen how Ausonius's references to Ovid's narration are rather diffused, but on various occasions they are limited

⁹⁵ On Modestinus's epigram (*AL* 273 R² = 267 SB) cf. Lebeck 1985; Cupaiuolo 1991.

⁹⁶ Parker 2010, p. 173.

⁹⁷ The *Cupido cruciatus* was probably composed between 379 and 382: cf. Franzoi 2002, pp. 17-18. Santini 2002, p. 243, proposes the period of Ausonius's stay in Trier, 365-375, but he does not exclude the possibility of a later revision. As for the epigrams, in the majority of the cases it is impossible to know the date of their composition (Kay 2001, p. 23). Even if we accepted a later date for many of them, as proposed by Cameron 1993, pp. 81-82, this would concern only the epigrams constructed on Greek models or translated from the Greek.

to isolated verbal echoes which can be picked up only by a very learned reader. For these references we cannot properly speak of allusion, neither by the definition of the term used by Pasquali nor by the one proposed by Conte.⁹⁸ Rather, they function as a kind of suggestion to the audience, offering an opportunity to create an interaction between each reader's memory of Ovid and Ausonius's text.⁹⁹ Each reader may or may not activate this interaction, depending on his or her knowledge of Ovid, but also on his or her perceptiveness and literary sensibilities in approaching a poetical text. The more the reader happens to detect the presence of Ovidian echoes and references, the more he or she can enhance the richness of the reading and appreciate Ausonius's skill. From this point of view the *Cupido cruciatus* is a particularly open work,¹⁰⁰ demanding and stimulating the collaboration of the reader more than other late antique compositions. Moreover, in so far as the text of this poem combines many references to the previous literary traditions it anticipates Sidonius Apollinaris by showing 'il gusto di letture nascoste e preziose, di cui si alimenta lo stile, e il piacere di far trasparire qua e là, per gli amici colti che sanno accorgersene, ghiotti riferimenti a questi celati modelli.'¹⁰¹

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⁹⁸ I am of course referring to Pasquali 1942 and Conte 1974.

⁹⁹ Ausonius's attention at the role of the reader is evidenced by his prefaces, particularly when, as in the case of the *Cento nuptialis* or the *Bissula*, they dwell on explanations commenting upon the techniques he employs. On this aspect cf. Pelttari 2011, pp. 165-167; on Ausonius and his dedicatees cf. Sivan 1992.

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the two passages of the *Cupido cruciatus* concerning the flowers of the afterworld and the representation of the heroines who are the protagonists of Cupid's dream. The analysis of these sections, where Ausonius's reference to Ovid is particularly evident, helps to better evaluate how and to what extent Ausonius echoes, refers to or draws on Ovid, even

though he does not mention him. It turns out that Ausonius's references to Ovid's narration are rather diffused, but on various occasions they are limited to isolated verbal echoes which can be picked up only by a very learned reader. For these references we cannot properly speak of allusion. Rather, they function as a kind of suggestion to the audience, offering an opportunity to create an interaction between each reader's memory of Ovid and Ausonius's text. The more the reader happens to detect the presence of Ovidian echoes and references, the more he or she can enhance the richness of the reading and appreciate Ausonius's skill.

CECILIA PAVARANI

CLAUDIAN AND THE *METAMORPHOSES*

Nec me mea lusit imago
(Claud. *praef. Hon. VI cons.* 21)¹

To sing before an audience of gods: this was Claudian's dream. The poet was not deceived by a false dream image of himself; he saw it realised when he recited eulogies before the Senate and the imperial court of Honorius. The poetic is in a certain sense the metamorphosis of the real, which – in the *praefatio* quoted above – is sublimated and elevated to an ideal, to the point where the senators and imperial dignitaries appear as Olympian deities.² The literary *lusus* is here combined with the pride of the poet and the desire to flatter his audience. The personal vanity to which Claudian gives voice in this verse contains a reminiscence of a scene from the myth of Narcissus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,

¹ 'It was no vain imagining'. The translations of Claudian quoted in the present paper are from the Loeb edition (Platnauer 1922). The text is from the critical edition *Les Belles Lettres* edited by Jean-Louis Charlet (Charlet 2002² [2000]); the poems not included in that edition are from the text of John B. Hall (Hall 1985).

² *Praef. Hon. VI cons.* 13-26 *Namque poli media stellantis in arce videbar / ante pedes summi carmina ferre Iovis; / utque favet somnus, plaudebant numina dictis / et circumfusi sacra corona chori. / [...] / Additur ecce fides nec me mea lusit imago, / inrita nec falsum somnia misit ebur. / En princeps, en orbis apex aequatus Olympo, / en quales memini, turba verenda, deos! / Fingere nil maius potuit sopor, altaque vati / conventum caelo praebuit aula parem* ('For me seemed I stood upon the very summit of the starry sky and laid my songs at Jove's feet, and, in the flattery of sleep, the gods and all the sacred band gathered about Jove's throne gave applause to my words. [...] My dream has come true; 'twas no vain imagining; nor did the false ivory gate send forth an unaccomplished dream. Behold our lord, behold earth towering to heaven's height! Here before me are gods such as I then saw, gods worthy of all reverence. Nought greater could dreams have fancied; this noble assembly offers the poet an audience like to that of heaven').

described as absorbed in contemplation of his face mirrored in the water:

Iste ego sum! Sensi, nec me mea fallit imago.
Uror amore mei, flammās moveoque feroque!³

Of course, while Claudian, devoted to success, is gratified by the esteem he enjoys, Narcissus succumbs to self-love, imprisoned in his own image.

Numerous images and poetic ideas pertaining to the sphere of change pass from Ovid's verses into those of Claudian. It is a semantic field in which the Augustan poet is a master, the supreme *auctor*, and the Late Roman poet therefore draws on him with predilection, as if saying 'metamorphosis' and 'Ovid' were one and the same thing.

The presence of Ovid,⁴ although quantitatively less pervasive than that of Vergil or Statius, is tangible in Claudian and seems to be focused principally on two lines that are in a certain sense antithetical to each other: on the one hand it appears in the gloomy and disquieting depictions of the Empire's enemies – whether they are political opponents of Stilicho or usurpers – and the other in graceful and vivid images of some of the *carmina minora*.

1. *Demonically Multiform*

In his accusatory poems addressed to Rufinus and Eutropius, Claudian uses metamorphosis as a literary device that serves to illustrate their evildoing, emphasising the wickedness of their behaviour with an 'expressionistic' technique.

³ Ov. *met.* III. 463-464 'Oh, I am he! I have felt it, I know now my own image. I burn with love of my own self; I both kindle the flames and suffer them.' The text of the *Metamorphoses* used is the Oxford edition by Richard J. Tarrant (Tarrant 2004). The translations quoted are from the Loeb edition (Miller 1916).

⁴ A general idea of the memory of Ovid in Claudian can be drawn from the survey by Annette H. Eaton (Eaton 1943), which subdivides the parallel passages into chapters devoted to Claudian's individual works; the length and number of these passages should, however, be reduced, as subsequent critics have sometimes done (cf. e.g. Charlet 1995, p. 131). Some studies support the fascination exerted by Ovid's poetry over various poems by Claudian. For example, for the *Epithalamium de nuptiis Honorii Augusti* see Charlet 1995; for *De raptu Proserpinae* von Albrecht 1989 and Hinds 2016.

1.1 Rufinus: life and condemnation

Flavius Rufinus, praetorian prefect of the East, to whom Claudian addresses his first diatribe,⁵ is described by the poet as a tool in the hands of evil forces threatening to destroy the world.⁶ At the beginning of the poem the reader is present at a *Concilium Furiarum*, a parody of the epic councils of Olympus, at which Megaera raises her voice. She intends to proceed with the destruction of the world willed by her sisters, by means of a man whom she has raised up in evil ways, namely Rufinus. The infernal beings approve the plan and therefore Megaera, in the guise of an old man, goes to Rufinus's house in Gaul to insinuate ambition and a lust for power into his soul and assist him to achieve high office at the court of Arcadius, to the detriment of the Empire. Her transformation into *longaevum senem* calls for white hair, deep wrinkles and a tottering gait, and is described as a metamorphosis:⁷

⁵ The work dates from the years 396-397 (on the dating of the two books that compose it see Charlet 2002² [2000], Tome II¹, pp. XXI-XXIV).

⁶ 'Il senso ultimo del carme claudiano sta [...] nella contrapposizione tra forze del bene e forze del male, tra luce e tenebre: un *certamen sublime* [...] *virtutum scelerumque*, come si dice in 1.297 s.': Gualandri 2002, p. 55; cf. also Fabbri 1918.

⁷ The ability to change their appearance is one of the prerogatives of the Furies in Latin epic and the motif 'constitutes almost a topos' (Prenner 2007, *ad v.* 134) with the narrative function of initiating or giving new impetus to the epic tale through a divine infernal intervention that inaugurates a series of misfortunes on earth. In Vergil Alecto plays the role of the old priestess Calybe, who incites Turnus to unleash war (*Aen.* VII. 415-420), in Silius Italicus Tisiphone mimics the gait and the voice of the widow Tiburna, who induces the collective suicide of the Saguntines besieged by the Carthaginians (*Pun.* II. 553-554). There is even an Ovidian example of the theme from Book III of the *Metamorphoses*: Juno appears to Semele in the guise of her nurse Beroe and persuades the maiden to ask her lover Jupiter for the gift that will lead to death, the vision of the God in his full radiance (*Nec nubes ante removit, / quam simulavit anum, posuitque ad tempora canos / sulcavitque cutem rugis et curva trementi / membra tulit passu* (*met.* III. 274-278, 'But before she put aside her concealing cloud she feigned herself an old woman, whitening her hair at the temples, furrowing her skin with wrinkles, and walking with bowed form and tottering steps'). In Claudian as in Vergil (but not in Silius), the human figures born from the transformation of the Furies acquire a semblance of wisdom conferred by the features of advanced age (white hair, wrinkles), but in some details the model is Ovid, as evidenced by the term *persulcata* for wrinkled skin, the detail of the tottering gait (*trementi* / [...] *passu*) and even the order in which the changes

Tunc in canitiem mutatis sponte colubris
 longaevum mentita senem rugisque severas
 persulcata genas et ficto languida passu
 invadit muros Elusae.⁸

Rufinus has had Megaera as both mother and teacher. From birth he owes his mode of being to her, in both his physical appearance and his malignant and versatile disposition: the serpents that form the Fury's hair shaped Rufinus' limbs as a new-born child by licking them with their tongues (*in Ruf.* I. 95-96),⁹ and the goddess subsequently instructed him in the arts of deception, simulation and dissimulation (*in Ruf.* I. 97-100). Then in Claudian's account Rufinus's body receives brutal treatment on the day of his death. When Arcadius recalls to Constantinople the Oriental troops that the poet says were entrusted to Stilicho, on arriving in Constantinople they tear to pieces the *praefectus praetorio Orientis*, enraged because they see him as the cause of their separation from their beloved commander (*in Ruf.* II. 348-439).¹⁰

appear. Then Claudian's v. 136 has the phonic imprint of a half-line from *the Thebaid* depicting the monster Poiné (*nocturno squalida passu, Theb.* I. 601), an infernal creature conceived in the marriage bed of the Furies.

⁸ Claud. *in Ruf.* I. 134-137 'Therupon, in the guise of an old man, her serpent locks changed at her desire to snowy hair, her dread cheeks furrowed with many a wrinkle and feigning weariness in her gait she enters the walls of Elusa'.

⁹ The image of the newborn being licked into shape by its mother is not new: cf. Vergil's depiction of the she-wolf on Aeneas' shield in *Aen.* VIII. 631-634 ([*Fecerat et [...] lupam*], *geminos huic ubera circum / ludere pendentis pueros et lambere matrem / impavidos, illam tereti cervice reflexam / mulcere alterno et corpora fingere lingua*, 'he had fashioned, too, the mother-wolf [...]; around her teats the twin boys hung playing, and mouthed their dam without fear; she, with shapely neck bent back, fondled them by turns, and moulded their limbs with her tongue', Engl. transl.: Fairclough 1954 [1918]) and the bear cub described in *Ov. met.* xv. 380-381 (*lambendo mater in artus / fingit et in formam, quantum capit ipsa, reducit*, 'but the mother licks it into shape, and in this way gives it as much of a form as she has herself').

¹⁰ This was in November 395. The recall of the troops to Constantinople reveals political tensions between eastern and western courts. However in the *In Rufinum*, Claudian burdens Rufinus with all the blame for the discord since, as Santo Mazzarino explains, the documentary sources of the period always make a clearly 'la distinzione fra l'imperatore e il suo governo, fra l'immutabile unità dell'impero e la reale tensione fra le *partes* [...]'. L'unità delle *partes* resta, ma solo in quanto ideologia, rappresentata dagli imperatori; la tensione è opera dei governi, ossia della realtà nuova, e contingente, che s'impone' (Mazzarino 1990² [1942], p. 90).

All the soldiers wish to take part in the mutilation of Rufinus' body by dealing it a sword blow, so much so that

spatium non invenit ira
nec locus est odiis [...]
Sic mons Aonius rubuit cum Penthea ferrent
Maenades aut subito mutatum Actaeona cornu
traderet insanis Latonia virgo Molossis.¹¹

Claudian depicts the cruel execution by combining sources in Juvenal and Statius' *Thebaid* with the imagery in two tales recounted in *the Metamorphoses*: the myth (found earlier in Euripides) of Pentheus who is torn to pieces by the Bacchae, and that of the hunter Actaeon transformed into a stag and torn to pieces by his own hounds. Through the fairly precise repetition¹² of a verse of Ovid's describing the latter metamorphic myth, Claudian seems to compare the wrath of the soldiers to the frenzy of Actaeon's hounds as they hurl themselves on their hapless prey and vie to sink their teeth into him:

Iam *loca* vulneribus *desunt*¹³

With the redoubling of their sword blows, as of the hounds' biting in Ovid, the body no longer suffices for them to vent all their resentment on it (*spatium non invenit ira, nec locus est odiis, in Ruf. II. 415-416 – loca vulneribus desunt, met. III. 237*).¹⁴

¹¹ *In Ruf. II. 415-420* 'There is not space enough to satisfy their anger [...]. Thus red with blood ran the Boeotian mountain when the Maenads caused Pentheus' destruction or when Latona's daughter seen by Actaeon betrayed the huntsman, suddenly transformed into a stag, to the fury of her Molossian hounds.'

¹² Indicated by Charlet 2002² [2000], Tome II¹, *ad v.* 415.

¹³ *Ov. met. III. 237* 'There is no place left for further wounds.'

¹⁴ For the image see (as noted by Levy 1971) *Amm. XIV. 9. 6: ita evisceratus ut cruciatibus membra deessent* ('he had been so disembowelled that he had no parts left to torture', Engl. transl.: Rolfe 1956 [1935]). The idea of wrath that finds no vent is then developed by Claudian in *in Ruf. II. 425-427*; reproaching Fortune for favouring an unworthy man, Claudian exclaims: *Da caput Odrysiis, truncum mereantur Achivi. / Quid reliquis dabitur? Nec singula membra peremptis / sufficiunt populis* ('Give the Trancians his head; let Greece have as her due his body. What shall be given the rest? Give but a limb apiece, there are not enough for the peoples he has ruined'). Rufinus' body, like that of the mythical figures mentioned above, is dismembered, as if the people whom his lust for power has harmed are now vying for it.

In the final scene of the invective, the setting returns to the underworld, where Rufinus arrives (*in Ruf.* II. 454-527). Before explaining to the readers the fate that awaits him after death, Claudian illustrates the system of punishments in force in the afterlife as he imagines it: sinners who do not confess their sins take on animal forms that best reflect the crimes committed by them in life (to atone for violence they become bears, wolves for theft, and so forth). Then, after a certain time, they are restored to their human forms:

Quos ubi per varios annos, per mille figuras
egit, Lethaeo purgatos flumine tandem
rursus ad humanae revocat primordia formae.¹⁵

This kind of ‘punitive metempsychosis’,¹⁶ fulfilled when the souls go to live temporarily in the bodies of animals, is clearly paralleled by the idea and the wording of the passage in Ovid’s poem in which Pythagoras sets out his theory of transmigration:

animam sic semper eandem
esse, sed in *varias* doceo migrare *figuras*¹⁷

¹⁵ *In Ruf.* II. 492-494 ‘When for thrice a thousand years he had forced these trough countless diverse shapes, he sends them back once more to the beginnings of human form purged at last with Lethe’s stream’.

¹⁶ See Levy 1971, *n. ad* II. 480-493 (with the references cited there) and Charlet 2002² [2000] Tome II¹, n. complémentaire to p. 119. For Rufinus Hades so described is not sufficiently harsh, and the penal system of Pythagorean stamp is inadequate: although he were to be reborn in a thousand bodies he could never purify his soul. So in the afterlife he is denied the many physiognomies granted to the other souls and Minos can only sentence him to lie for eternity in the nethermost recesses of Tartarus (*in Ruf.* II. 526-527). One gets the impression that Claudian anticipates Dante’s ‘contrappasso per contrasto’: to punish the exceptional mobility of character that marked Rufino in his lifetime, the appropriate penance for him is immobility, the failure of metamorphosis. However, as Levy aptly notes, ‘the artistic effect of the supplanted punishment [is not reduced] by its subsequent abandonment’ (Levy 1971, *n. ad* II. 480-493).

¹⁷ *Met.* xv. 171-172 ‘So do I teach that the soul is ever the same, though it passes into ever changing bodies’. The Ovidian passage supports the lection *varias*: see Charlet 2002² [2000], Tome II¹, *ad v.* 491. Pythagoras’ speech (*met.* xv. 75-478) is described by Hélène Vial as a hypothesis of what Ovid might have written if he had intended to deal with metempsychosis and not metamorphosis’ (Vial 2010, p. 76), but there is a contiguity which is also terminological between the philosophical lexicon used by Pythagoras and the lexicon of metamorphosis: Bömer 1969-1986, *ad met.* xv. 172: ‘With *varias* [...] *figuras* Ovid

With his customary combination of techniques, Claudian takes the adjective *varius* from Ovid, but combines it with *annus* instead of *figure*, a noun that receives the numeral *mille* as an amplifying attribute.

It is significant that the verse of the *Metamorphoses* exerted its suggestion on the invective in another infernal panorama depicted by Claudian. These are his lines describing the surroundings of Elusa, the Gallic town where Rufinus was born and where the poet, with a bold renewal of tradition, places an entrance to the Underworld: the peasants who work the nearby fields *simulacra* [...] / *pallida defunctasque vident* migrare figuras.¹⁸

1.2 The Consul Eutropius: A reality that Surpasses in Horror Any Metamorphosis of Myth

In the invective against the eunuch Eutropius,¹⁹ who after Rufinus' death was the most influential political figure in Constantinople, the metamorphoses of myth are again surpassed by an even more absurd reality. The theme, in fact, is combined here with the rhetorical procedure of *Überbietung*, dear to Claudian.²⁰ The rise to power of Eutropius, *spado consul*, is presented by the poet as the most extraordinary of the mythical transformations narrated by literary tradition. The monstrous aspect of Eutropius' career consists not so much in the fact that he has become

again uses an expression on the boundary between a philosophical lexis and the lexis typical of the *Metamorphoses*.

¹⁸ *In Ruf.* I. 127-128 '[The inhabitants] see the pale ghosts pass and the shades of the dead'.

¹⁹ Both books of invective were written before the fall of Eutropius, exiled to Cyprus in summer 399, and before the end of his consular office (for the dating of the work see Cameron 1970, pp. 136-137; Long 1996, pp. 149-177). On many points of the composition Ovid's poems on amorous subjects exerted a significant influence (most extensive than that of the *Metamorphoses*), being skilfully used by Claudian to deride the effeminate Eutropius (e.g. compare Claud. *Eutr.* I. 271-281 and Ov. *ars* I. 689-696 and note how the eunuch, is out of place as a warrior, like Achilles on Skyros amid the looms).

²⁰ Curtius sees Claudian, and before him Statius, as the greatest 'virtuoso' of this topos (Curtius 2013, pp. 162-165). On the rhetorical artifice of the *Überbietung*, which could be effectively summed up in Claudian's verse *Taceat superata vetustas* (*in Ruf.* I. 283, 'The days of old are surpassed, let them keep silence'), see Canobbio 2004.

a eunuch as in having, as a eunuch, held the offices of *consul*, *iudex*, *ductor*:

In volucrem Tereus, Cadmus se vertit in anguem;
 Scylla novos mirata canes. Hunc arbore figit,
 elevat hunc pluma, squamis hunc fabula vestit,
 hunc solvit fluvio. Numquam spado consul in orbe
 nec iudex ductorve fuit. Quodcumque virorum
 est decus, eunuchi scelus est.²¹

The poet lists a series of metamorphoses, mentioned by the name and fate of the single protagonists (Tereus turned into a hoopoe, Cadmus a snake, Scylla a woman with her waist girdled by dogs).²² Then there follows, in vv. 293-295, the reference to the elements of nature (trees, birds, serpents, rivers) where the tradition is drawn on for other legendary characters. The periphrasis as a whole, as Gioseffi notes, is 'a kind of definition of the content of Ovid's poem'²³ and the wording of v. 295 (*elevat ... pluma*), with its verbal borrowing²⁴ from the episode of the Minyades turned into bats *met.* IV. 410 (*elevat ... pluma*), seems to confirm a quite explicit reference to Ovid.²⁵ The imagery of metamorphosis thus evoked is important as it sums up and brings to a logical

²¹ Claud. *Eutr.* I. 293-298 'Tereus was changed into a bird, Cadmus into a snake; Scylla looked in amaze on the dogs that girt her waist. Ancient stories relates how one was transformed into a tree and thus attached to earth, how another grew wings and flew, how a third was clothed with scales and yet another melted into a river. But no country has ever had a eunuch for a consul or judge or general. What in a man is honourable is disgraceful in an emascuate'.

²² See respectively *met.* VI. 671-674, IV. 563-603 and XIV. 1-74.

²³ Gioseffi 2004, p. 255. For the transformations into a tree narrated by Ovid, think of Pyramus and Thisbe in *met.* IV. 51-166, Philemon and Baucis in *met.* VIII. 712-720, Cyparissus in *met.* X. 106-142; for birds see for instance Semiramis turned into a dove in *met.* IV. 47-48, the Pierides into magpies in *met.* V. 294-304 and 669-678; for transformations into reptiles think for example of Cadmus and Harmonia (IV. 563-603), Achelous (IX. 62-79), Esculapius (XV. 669-694); for rivers and springs, the examples are similarly numerous (Marsyas in *met.* VI. 382-400, Acis in XIII. 882-897, Cyane in V. 425-437).

²⁴ Noted previously by Birt (Birt 1892, *ad v.* 295).

²⁵ It is not necessary, however, to indicate the *Metamorphoses* as an exclusive reference for the mythical *exempla* in these verses, especially as the myths they recall are handed down from different sources (and in drawing on the mythological tradition, Claudian in this passage uses various terms associated with different genres: first *cantatur*, then the paraphrase *Erecthei* [...] *scaena theatri* – with clear reference to Attic tragedy – finally *fabula*).

conclusion what Claudian had outlined in the first part of the work, namely that the deeds and the career of Eutropius are unique and have no precedent even in the ancient fables.

2. *The Defeat of Evil*

Thanks to the image-creating power of metamorphosis, often associated with infernal representations, Claudian polemicalises with Rufinus and Eutropius, those who in Stilicho's eyes are the internal enemies of the Empire. Some other influences coming from Ovid's depictions of chaos and the flood colour Claudian's language as he celebrates the defeat of external enemies. Altering the truth by deception, they threaten to plunge the world into the primeval tumult of the elements, but Theodosius and the Vandal general restore the political order and the world is once more governed in accordance with justice and order.

2.1 Maximus and Eugenius: Metamorphosis Resurfaces

In the *Panegyric for the Fourth Consulate of Honorius*, Claudian inserts a long eulogy of Theodosius²⁶ celebrating, among other things, his victories over the usurpers Maximus (in the year 388) and Eugenius (in 394). The incidents in question are different from each other in chronology, characters and historical motives, but in this work as in others Claudian likes to portray the two almost as twins²⁷ in a simple scheme of opposition, with legitimate power versus power usurped. They have in common, after their defeat, the same attitude of cowardly submission:

Amissa specie, raptis insignibus ambo
in vultus rediere suos manibusque revinctis
oblatis gladiis submitunt colla paratis
et vitam veniamque rogant.²⁸

²⁶ *Hon. IV cons.* 41-121.

²⁷ See e.g. *gemini ... tyranni*, 72 ('tyrants twain'); *ausus uterque nefas, domini respersus uterque / insontis iugulo*, 75-76 ('both dared monstrous guilt; both stained their hands with an innocent emperor's blood').

²⁸ *Claud. Hon. IV cons.* 83-86 'Gone was their glory, their weapons were reft from them and they reduced to their former state; their arms were bound behind

The words *amissa specie* (v. 83) express the metamorphic significance of the passage.²⁹ Maximus and Eugenius wear the masks of a deceptive and unjust power, but after being defeated by Theodosius they abandon the fallacious form in which they had sought to rise to power and so regain their own identities, returning *in vultus [...] suos* (v. 84). The poetic antecedent of the latter expression occurs in Ovid,³⁰ in the context of a divine metamorphosis: in the *Fasti* Janus explains that he took on the form of a god, from the confused mass that he was originally, in the course of the vast movement that led from *chaos* to *cosmos*:

Tunc ego, qui fueram globus et sine imagine moles,
in faciem redii dignaque membra deo.
 Nunc quoque, confusae quondam nota parva figurae,
 ante quod est in me postque, videtur idem.³¹

The verbal echo is certainly too slight for the existence of an allusion to the passage in the *Fasti*, but it seems significant that the poet's memory fastens on the twofold image of Janus, as if to suggest once again that the revolts of Maximus and Eugenius are two sides of the same coin and both were overcome by the triumph of order.

2.2 Gildo Defeated: Return to Order

Regained political tranquillity is also celebrated in *the incipit* of the *Bellum Gildonicum*,³² which in the summer of 398 hailed the defeat of the *comes* Gildo in Africa:

their backs and they stretched forth their necks to the sword's imminent stroke, begging for pardon and for life'.

²⁹ *Species*, like *forma* and *facies*, is a technical expression, though generic, in metamorphosis narratives: see Vial 2010, p. 395 and the bibliography *ivi* cited. It is impossible to bring out this point in translation (cf. Barr: 'with the loss of their feigned dignity'; Charlet: 'perdu leur lustre').

³⁰ As noted by Charlet 2002² [2000], Tome II², *ad v.* 84.

³¹ Ov. *fast.* 1. 111-114 'Twas then that I, till that time a mere ball, a shapeless lump, assumed the face and members of a god. And even now, small index of my erst chaotic state, my front and back look just the same', Engl. transl: Frazer 1959 (1931).

³² On the contribution of the memory of Ovid in the composition of the work see Schindler 2009, pp. 98-99.

Redditus inperiis Auster subiectaque rursus
alterius convexa poli.³³

Here Claudian evokes the verse in *the Metamorphoses* announcing the end of the great flood and introducing the story of the new creation of the human race:

Redditus orbis erat³⁴

The consonance between the two contexts is remarkable given that, as Charlet notes,³⁵ ‘the feeling of joy and liberation that Claudian experiences together with the Romans is similar to that of Deucalion and Pyrrha [...] after the flood. Thus, the return of Africa to the Western Empire acquires a cosmic scale; the secession of Gildo appears unnatural, contrary to the nature of things, just as the flood was contrary to the world order. The end of this secession marks a return to the natural order’. Just as the flood effaces the *discrimina* between the elements, so Gildo’s revolt leads to an undue alteration of the ‘confines’ of the Empire (Africa – *Auster* by metonymy in Claudian’s verse – had placed itself under the sway of the court of Arcadius). If the flood was followed by the repopulation of the world and the universal metamorphosis of nature, so in Claudian, after Gildo’s defeat, the Empire is ready to experience a new era of prosperity, ruled by Honorius and Arcadius again (*concordia fratrum / plena redit, Gild. 4-5*³⁶).

3. *The World of Nature*

A fervid imagination brings the Claudian of the *carmina minora*, rich in fresh and vivid images of the natural world, closer to the

³³ Claud. *Gild.* 1-2 ‘The kingdom of the south is restored to our empire, the sky of that other hemisphere is once more brought into subjection’.

³⁴ Ov. *met.* I. 348 ‘The world was indeed restored’.

³⁵ ‘Le sentiment de joie et de délivrance qu’éprouve Claudien avec les Romains est analogue à celui de Deucalion et Pyrrha [...] après le déluge. Ainsi, le retour de l’Afrique à l’Empire d’Occident prend une portée cosmique; la sécession de Gildon apparaît comme contre-nature, aussi contraire à la nature des choses que le déluge était contraire à l’ordre du monde. La fin de cette sécession marque le retour à l’ordre naturel’: Charlet 2002² [2000], Tome II², pp. 190-191 (n. compl. 1 to p. 122). The parallel is also noted by Olechowska, *ad v.* 1.

³⁶ ‘Unswerving singleness of purpose unites the brother emperors’.

poetry of the *Metamorphoses*. The marvellous quality of certain descriptions arises out of the multifarious aspects of the lives of animals and the forms of nature. The surfacing of the Ovidian memories³⁷, although in minute fragments, enhances the effect of their shifting nature as being appropriate to reality skilfully imitated in Claudian's smooth verses.

3.1 The Phoenix

The phoenix appears among the metamorphic figures illustrated by Pythagoras in Book xv of the *Metamorphoses* (vv. 392-407). After five centuries of life the mythical bird lies down in its fragrant nest, dies, but then generates from its body a young phoenix in turn destined to live on in its descendant.³⁸ This cycle of existences allows it to be reborn and so supersede the fate of common mortals, who observe the deterioration of their bodies, thus bearing witness to the superiority of the immaterial over matter. The phoenix is described by Pythagoras as an exception in the panorama of living beings, which all arise from other bodies and are reborn into other bodies after death, while the phoenix continuously regenerates itself.

Claudian devotes one of his most famous short poems, *carm. min.* 27,³⁹ to the phoenix. A covert political meaning has sometimes even been glimpsed in it by virtue of the transcendence it symbolises.⁴⁰ On closer examination, the Phoenix does not undergo a true change of form, but the perpetuation of its form itself. This perennial character also appears to be guaranteed by a special diet. Claudian tells us that the phoenix neither drinks nor eats:

Non *epulis* saturare famem, non fontibus ullis
adsuetus prohibere sitim, sed purior illum

³⁷ On Claudian's debt to Ovid in some *carmina minora* see Luceri's article included in the present book.

³⁸ Among the numerous studies on the myth of the phoenix that by Van den Broek 1972 is fundamental.

³⁹ For which a commentary exists by Maria Lisa Ricci (Ricci 1981).

⁴⁰ The phoenix is said to represent the perpetuation of the Theodosian-Stiliconian dynasty (see Christiansen – Sebesta 1985, p. 205).

solis fervor alit ventosaque pabula libat
Tethyios, *innocui carpens alimenta* vaporis.⁴¹

The bird's only sustenance is the oceanic vapour, harmless as the 'vegetarian' nutrients prescribed by Ovid's Pythagoras at the end of his speech mentioned above.⁴² There is a surprising similarity between Claudian's verses and those of the *Metamorphoses* in which Pythagoras urges men to shun the flesh of animals (alluded to by *epulis*) and to *carpere alimenta mitia*, as if they were herbivores:

ora vacent epulis, *alimentaque mitia carpant*⁴³

One can say that the phoenix, by abstaining from food, fulfils the Pythagorean imperative most perfectly.

3.2 The Porcupine and Cadmus

The most extraordinary feature of the porcupine, the subject of *carm. min.* 9,⁴⁴ is its quills. In his poem Claudian depicts them not as they might appear in a painting or mosaic, but as alive and growing, a forest rising threateningly skywards (*silva minax* [...] *crescit* [...] *exit* [...] *sese producit*, vv. 11-16). The metaphor combines the vegetable and animal worlds, while *iuncturae* bold as *proelia* [...] *picturata* (vv. 11-12) bring out the creature's

⁴¹ Claud. *carm. min.* 27. 13-16 'It needs no food to satisfy hunger nor any drink to quench thirst; the sun's clear beam is its food, the sea's rare spray its drink – exhalations such as these form its simple nourishment'.

⁴² The concluding words are linked to the opening of the speech, repeating it almost to the letter (see *met.* xv. 81-82: *prodiga divitias alimentaue mitia tellus / suggerit atque epulas sine caede et sanguine praebebat*, 'the earth, prodigal of her wealth, supplies you her kindly sustenance and offers you food without bloodshed and slaughter'): Bömer 1969-1986, *ad v.* 477; in the light of Ovid's insistence on *mitis*, there is a clear Ovidian colouring to the adjective in Claudian.

⁴³ Ov. *met.* xv. 478 'Make not their flesh your food, but seek a more harmless nourishment'. Other Ovidian parallels noted by the comments on Claudian's poem are related to generic consonances, as in the case of *renasci*, which is a 'thematic word of the theme of the phoenix' (Ricci 2001 *ad loc.*) and is therefore found in both *c. m.* 27. 51 and *met.* xv. 402.

⁴⁴ On the allusions of *carm. min.* 9 to Ovid focuses Luceri in this volume (see pp. 144-150).

pugnacity, its readiness to use the weapons nature has endowed it with.⁴⁵

Stat corpore toto
silua minax, iaculisque rigens in proelia crescit
picturata seges; quorum cute fixa tenaci
alba subit radix alternantesque colorum
tincta vices spatiis internigrantibus exit
in solidae speciem pinnae tenuataque furtim
levis in extremum sese producit acumen.⁴⁶

In this passage we can glimpse a mythical reference taken from Ovid. In depicting the porcupine quills, Claudian is inspired by the transformation of Cadmus into a serpent as recounted in *met.* IV. 576-580. The source of the scene is not immediately recognisable – a typical feature of Claudian's eclectic and elusive imitative art – and he uses it mainly to impress on the ekphrasis the sense of movement that turns out to be the poem's principal quality. The rodent's quills stand erect on its body, forming sharp points, exactly as happens to the hero's legs in Ovid, which taper into a single extremity. From his model Claudian takes the key moments of the change, namely the elongation and thinning, as well as the language that expresses them (*furtim-paulatim*, *crescere-increscere*, *tenuor*, *acumen*); yet, in their outcomes, the forms portrayed are the opposite of each other: the porcupine is wholly stretched upwards, while Cadmus falls to the ground, a snake doomed to crawl on the ground:

Ut serpens in longam tenditur alvum,
durataeque cuti squamas *increscere* sentit
nigraque caeruleis variari corpora guttis;
in pectusque cadit pronus commissaque in unum
paulatim tereti *tenuantur acumine* crura.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See vv. 17-20.

⁴⁶ Claud. *carm. min.* 9. 10-16 'All over the body grows a threatening thicket: a harvest of brightly coloured spears bristles up ready for battle. The roots of these weapons are white and are firmly fixed in the animal's skin. The quills are themselves parti-coloured with black bands and come to a stiff quill-like point, diminishing in diameter towards the tip which is smooth and sharp'.

⁴⁷ Ov. *met.* IV. 576-580 'He was stretched out in long snakey form; he felt his

The porcupine's nature is almost incredible, yet it actually confirms the possibilities of myth,⁴⁸ including metamorphoses.

3.3 *Vimen erat*: The Marvel of Coral

In Book IV of Ovid's poem we witness the spectacle of a metamorphosis of a 'tactile' kind. It describes a material that from being flexible becomes rigid. Perseus, having just freed Andromeda, uproots some tender twigs from the seabed on which to lay Medusa's head, and they are turned to stone by the monster's power. The sea nymphs amuse themselves by repeating the miracle which, as the poet observes, still occurs today as in the mythical time of the narrative:

Nunc quoque curaliis eadem natura remansit,
duritiam tacto capiant ut ab aere, quodque
vimen in aequore erat, fiat super aequora saxum.⁴⁹

The 'discovery' of coral, illustrated by Ovid in etiological terms, leaves its mark on Claudian's epithalamium for the marriage of Honorius and Maria;⁵⁰ it forms part of the bride's wedding gifts of jewellery. The celebratory verses take on an Ovidian tinge when the Nereid Doto emerges from the sea with a tribute worthy of the virgin:⁵¹

skin hardening and scales growing on it, while iridescent spots besprinkled his darkening body. He fell prone upon his belly, and his legs were gradually moulded together into one and drawn out into a slender, pointed tail'.

⁴⁸ Claudian says as much in the exordium of the poem: observing the extraordinary animal, the poet says he was convinced of the truth of an old belief, the existence of the Stymphalian birds, with metallic feathers capable of being used as arrows (*carm. min.* 9. 1-6).

⁴⁹ *Ov. met.* IV. 750-752 'And even till this day the same nature has remained in coral so that they harden when exposed to air, and what was a pliant twig beneath the sea is turned to stone above'. A depiction of coral quite similar to this is found in *met.* XV. 416-417 (*Sic et curalium, quo primum contigit auras / tempore, durescit; mollis fuit herba sub undis*, 'So also coral hardens at the first touch of air, whereas it was a soft plant beneath the water').

⁵⁰ Whose debt to Ovid is examined in Charlet 1995.

⁵¹ The apt replacement of Ovid's *saxum* by *gemma* is a device that enables Claudian to insert the brief episode into the context of the wedding gifts for Maria: Charlet 1995, p. 130.

Mergit se subito vellitque corallia Doto:
vimen erat dum stagna subit; processerat undis:
 gemma fuit.⁵²

The virtues of coral are taken for granted by Claudian and the goddess is therefore fully aware of the gesture made, no longer new and marvellous (*factum mirabile*) as in Ovid. The poetic scene, however, retains the astonishing immediacy of the transformation, marked by the metrical-syntactic pauses and the contrast between the enduring condition expressed by *erat* and the timely appearance of *fiat-fuit*.

3.4 The Nile and the Great Flood

The close of *carm. min.* 28, dedicated by the Egyptian poet to the Nile,⁵³ celebrates the fruitful flood filled with icastic images. The fields are transformed and look like the sea; the separation between heaven and earth is effaced:

Defectis solitum referens cultoribus aequor
 effluit Aegaeo stagnantior, acrior alto
 Ionio seseque patentibus explicat arvis.
 Fluctuat omnis ager; remis sonuere novalis;
 saepius, aestivo iaceat cum forte sopore,
 cernit cum stabulis armenta natantia pastor.⁵⁴

The annual flood has waves more swollen than those of the Aegean or Ionian Sea, the fields sway, the splashing of oars echoes in the fallow, the pastor sees floating folds and herds. The observation point, effectively internal to the scene described, is that of a man who inhabits this landscape, become fantastic, because of the disruption of the natural order of the elements. Although

⁵² Claud. *Hon. nupt.* 169-171 'Doto suddenly dives to gather coral, a plant so long as it is beneath the water, a jewel once it is brought forth from the waves'.

⁵³ On this carmen and its echoes from Ovid's poetry see Luceri's analysis in the present volume (pp. 150-158).

⁵⁴ Claud. *carm. min.* 28. 37-42 'Then, bringing back to the fainting husbandmen its accustomed waters, it o'erflows ampler than the Aegean, fiercer than the deep Ionian, and spreads itself over the low-lying country. All the fields are aswim; plough-land sounds to the beat of the oar, and full often the shepherd, o'ercome with summer's heat, wakes to see flocks and fold carried away by the flood'.

the river overflowing its banks is a real occurrence in Egypt and familiar enough to the people who see it taking place each year, yet in these beautiful verses it seems like a dream vision of the shepherd seeking protection from the summer heat.

Our thoughts turn to some of the scenes of the Ovidian flood mentioned above (*met.* I. 274-312), whose 'visionary power' is perceived as unique in Roman poetry.⁵⁵ It seems almost as if Claudian, in portraying the Egyptian shepherd, had excerpted the verses from one of the vignettes in the *Metamorphoses* depicting agriculture and fishery revolutionised by the presence of water:

Iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant;
omnia pontus erat, deerant quoque litora ponto.
Occupat hic collem, cumba sedet alter adunca
et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper ararat;
ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae
navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo.⁵⁶

The descriptions both play on paradox and on *adynaton*; some particulars match (in the detail of the oars, Claudian prefers the phonic quality). However, there is a striking difference between Ovid's cosmic flood, extraordinary and destructive in human history, and the *solitum aequor* of the Nile, providential for the crops.

Horace's ode 1. 2 held a definite fascination for later Latin poetry about the flood myth. It inspired Ovid's image of fishing on top of the elm⁵⁷ (*Ov. met.* I. 296 *hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo*, ~ *Hor. carm.* I. 2. 9 *piscium et summa genus haesit ulmo*⁵⁸), likewise borrowed by Claudian in *Gild.* 43, which again embeds the mythical figure of the flood in his contemporary world. The food shortage, caused by the revolt of the *comes* Gildo

⁵⁵ See Barchiesi 2005, *ad v.* 292, and the bibliography cited there.

⁵⁶ *Ov. met.* I. 291-296 'And now the sea and land have no distinction. All is sea, but a sea without a shore. Here one man seeks a hilltop in his flight; another sits in his curved skiff, plying the oars where lately he was plowed; one sails over his fields of grain or the roof of his buried farmhouse, and one takes fish caught in the elm-tree's top.'

⁵⁷ See Barchiesi 2005, *ad v.* 296.

⁵⁸ 'And the race of fish became lodged in the tops of elm trees': Engl. transl. Rudd 2004.

in Africa, famishes the city of Rome, which, being personified, tells Jupiter of its misfortunes. They include the flooding of the Tiber,⁵⁹ which compels the city to be ‘navigated’ by huge boats, as in Pyrrha’s fatal times.

Quid referam [...]

aut fluvium per tecta vagum summisque minantem
collibus? Ingentes vixi submersa carinas
remorumque sonos et Pyrr<h>ae saecula sensi.⁶⁰

With the memory of Horace examined by Gualandri⁶¹ (*Gild.* 43 *Pyrrhae saecula sensi*, ~ Hor. *carm.* 1. 2. 5-6 *grave ne rediret / saeculum Pyrrhae*⁶²), in the passage of invective there returns, this time with an ominous cadence, the rhythm of the oars already characteristic of the quiet Nilotic scene.

Reading the passages of Claudian examined above has made it possible to identify traces and fragments of reminiscences of Ovid,⁶³ which had multiple outcomes in Claudian’s verses. In the invectives, the reminiscences of the Augustan poet acquire a scoptic purpose. In describing Rufinus’ death and damnation in hell, Claudian is inspired by the most ‘extreme’ transformations⁶⁴ described in the *Metamorphoses*, respectively the annihilation of his body and his mutation into an animal. The poem against Eutropius presents the *monstrum* of a eunuch consul as an event that surpasses even the most amazing Ovidian tales and expresses the paradox of reality surpassing fiction. In recalling the risks that the Roman world ran when Maximus, Eugenius

⁵⁹ On the historicity of this event at the time of the Gildo crisis see Gualandri 2013, p. 121.

⁶⁰ Claud. *Gild.* 39-43 ‘Why tell [...] of Tiber’s flooded stream, sweeping betwixt roofs and threatening the very hills? My submerged city has borne mighty ships, echoed the sound of oars, and experienced Pyrrha’s flood.’

⁶¹ Gualandri 2013, pp. 120-122.

⁶² ‘For fear the disastrous age of Pyrrha should return’: Engl. transl. Rudd 2004.

⁶³ It was not intended here to examine the degree to which the Ovidian model would have been recognised by listeners to or readers of Claudian’s text (whether the latter are ancient or modern), and all the less so given that the variables related to this point are numerous and often elusive (in this respect Gualandri 2013 speaks of ‘elusive’ memory).

⁶⁴ Segal 2005, p. LXXX.

and Gildo rebelled against the imperial power, Claudian rewrites some Ovidian scenarios of the primordial chaos and the great flood, and then celebrates the victories obtained by Theodosius, Honorius and Stilicho as the triumphs of a renewed cosmic order, beneficial to mankind and the whole universe. The influence of the *Metamorphoses* can finally be traced in some figurative details of the *carmina minora*, in which nature is portrayed as constantly changing. They were generated by the power of Ovid's language, which Claudian responded to and absorbed.

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Abstract

Numerous images and poetic ideas pertaining to the sphere of change pass from Ovid's verses into those of Claudian. The presence of Ovid seems to be focused principally on two lines that are in a certain sense antithetical to each other: on the one hand in the gloomy and disquieting depictions of the Empire's enemies – whether they are political opponents of Stilicho or usurpers – and on the other in graceful and vivid images of some of the *carmina minora*.

ECHOES OF OVID IN CLAUDIAN'S *CARMINA MINORA* 9 AND 28

In the long list of *Testimonia variorum de Claudiano et Claudiani scriptis* prefacing the 1677 edition of Claudian's works by Guillaume Pyron (Gulielmus Pyrrho) we find a perhaps surprising comment attributed to Julius Caesar Scaliger:¹ 'Idem ait quaedam Claudiani carmina speciosiora esse quam Ovidiana.'²

This brief remark inspires one of the *comparationes* established by Scaliger in the *Poetices Libri Septem*³ between the pillars of Augustan poetry (Virgil, Horace and Ovid) and the most noteworthy poets of the Imperial period and Late Antiquity (Lucan, Statius, Martial, Ausonius and Claudian himself), in order to account for the stylistic and formal solutions of the *imitatio*.⁴

The parallel between Ovid and Claudian concerns both *met.* 1. 168-180 (the representation of the *concilium deorum*) and

¹ On Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558) see Hall jr. 1950, Ferraro 1971, Cairns 1986, Cubelier de Beynac – Magnien 1986 and Balavoine – Laurens 1986.

² Pyrrho 1677, p. VIII (although the section entitled *Censura et testimonia variorum de Claudiano et Claudiani scriptis* is unnumbered). On the same page the French scholar admits that many of the *testimonia* about Claudian are taken from the collection of *Auctorum veterum, semiveterum, nonnullorum de recentibus, de Cl. Claudiano testimonia* published by Barthius 1650 ('Barthius, qui plurima nobis suppeditavit testimonia'), in which, however, Scaliger's aforementioned opinion is absent.

³ The *Poetices libri septem*, which were destined to exert great influence on the literary theories of the following centuries, were published posthumously in 1561 in Lyon; in the same year they were reprinted in Geneva, then reissued twice in 1581 and again in 1586 (Scaliger's work is edited with German translation and commentary by Deitz – Vogt-Spira – Musäus 1994-2011).

⁴ For Scaliger, the careful study of the forms of the past represents a stimulus to not only worship but even surpass the models. See Scaliger 1561, p. 214 (v. 1): 'ut quod ab antiquis dictum, an melius dici queat, dispiciamus'.

rapt. III. 3-5 (the convening of the council of Gods by Jupiter's messenger, Iris), where Claudian wrote verses 'more splendid than those of Ovid.'⁵ The comparison is not isolated within Scaliger's book v, which bears the not surprising title *Criticus. De imitatione et iudicio*, and demonstrates that in the opinion of its author, the first century-poet is not always regarded as the better one.⁶ Admiration for Claudian is openly declared elsewhere.⁷

The influence of Ovid on Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*, pointed out in Scaliger's *ars poetica*, had nevertheless been known long before, as evidenced by the exegetical tradition of twelfth-thirteenth century *Scholastica*⁸ and the numerous quotations of Ovid found in the first systematic commentary on *The Rape*

⁵ Scaliger 1561, p. 286 (v. 16): 'speciosiora quam Ovidiana illa'.

⁶ Thus, in the description of Ceres' wagon (Ov. *met.* v. 642-643 and Claud. *rapt.* I. 181-190) Claudian seems to outdo his model, because he is more impassioned and elaborate, while Ovid is more relaxed and simple, cf. Scaliger 1561, p. 281 (v. 16): 'Cereris curram tam Claudianus quam Ovidius describere. Verum hic levissime, nec suo more, perstrinxit in quinto Metamorphoseon [...] Ille ambitiosius in primo de Raptu'. In the *certamen* that Scaliger establishes between Ov. *met.* I. 21-31 and Claud. *rapt.* I. 248-253 in the same chapter, however, Claudian is bettered without question. See Scaliger 1561, p. 286 (v. 16): 'Claudianus in Proserpinae tela cum Ovidio certat de rerum sedibus post primam confusionem. Uter igitur vincat, ex his manifestum erit [here Claudian's passage from *De raptu Proserpinae* follows]. Nihil minus, sed cum vulgo loquutus est'.

⁷ Speaking in Claudian's favour the scholar lamented that a poet as fine as Claudian wanted matter worthy of his talents, cf. Scaliger 1561, p. 321 (vi. 5): 'Maximus poeta Claudianus, solo argumento ignobiliore oppressus, addit de ingenio quantum deest materiae. Felix in eo calor, cultus non invisus, temperatum iudicium, dictio candida, numeri non affectati, acute dicta multa sine ambitione'.

⁸ We can find significant traces of the influence of Ovid on Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* in the commentary which has been transcribed in the thirteenth-fourteenth century codex Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lat. class. c. 12, olim Philippicus 8776 (= L₁₀ in Hall 1985, see Hall 1986, pp. 16-17): this must be attributed to Geoffrey of Vitry, as argued by Clarke – Giles 1973. Onorato 2008, p. 101, points out that Geoffrey used Ovid's text as an 'indispensabile sussidio per l'*explanatio* di un poema mitologico dinanzi a un uditorio scolastico' but that he didn't recognize Claudian's direct dependence on Ovid: in this regard, the link between the *Metamorphoses* and *The Rape of Proserpina* is rather clearly postulated in the fourteenth century by Martin from Vimercate or, rather, by the author of the *antigraphus* from which Martin copied the commentary on *De raptu Proserpinae* in the codex Leiden, Bibliothek der Rijksuniversiteit B. P. L. 105 A (= J₄ in Hall 1985, see Hall 1986, p. 12). At the end of the first preface to this text we read: *materiam huius libri, scilicet raptum Proserpinae, ponit Ovidius in quinto Metamorphoseos ultra medium* (see Onorato 2008, p. 101, n. 113).

of *Proserpina*, published by Aulus Janus Parrhasius at the beginning of the sixteenth century.⁹

After Parrhasius and Scaliger, the presence of Ovid in the poetic *corpus* of Claudian is recognized with increasing frequency by the ponderous commentaries that have accompanied his works since Pulmannus' edition (1572), although, as is known, it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that we would see the first 'scientific' editions by Jeep 1876-1879 and Birt 1892.¹⁰ The latter, published in the collection of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* and characterized by almost definitive textual solutions, furnishes a rich *apparatus* of Claudian's models and sources. The *loci similes* demonstrate with certainty Claudian's intimate familiarity with Ovid's poems. However, due to the typical constraints of a critical *apparatus* in a modern edition, the list is little more than a catalogue of verbal concordances without discussion.

A more detailed study of the various undeniable points of contact between Ovid and Claudian is provided by the dissertation defended by Annette Hawkins Eaton in 1943 at the Catholic University in Washington. On the one hand the essay 'unearths many possible examples of the influence of Ovid on Claudian (far more than appear in Birt's massive edition) but after a rigid evaluation rejects most of them.'¹¹ On the other hand it struggles to be more than a 'catalogue de passages parallèles cités sans être discutés ni du point de vue critique [...] ni du point de vue littéraire'¹² and establishes comparisons which could be

⁹ Parrhasius's commentary, which appeared with no place and no date of publication (though it seems most likely to have been published in Milan in 1500), was reprinted several times during the sixteenth century. See Charlet 1987, p. 33 n. 15 and, more generally, Prenner 2005.

¹⁰ In addition to the edition of Pullmannus with notes by Martinus Antonius Del Rio (1572), we should mention the exegetical works of Claverius (1602), Barthius (1612 and 1650) and Heinsius (1650 and 1665), and the two ponderous commentaries of Gesner 1759 and Burmannus 1760, which are essential for some of the eighteenth and nineteenth century compilers' works (for a complete account of the printed editions of Claudian see Birt 1892, pp. CXXXIII-CCIV; Hall 1986, pp. 130-139; Charlet 1987, pp. 32-34 and especially Charlet 1991, pp. LXI-LXVIII).

¹¹ So Green 2013, p. 260.

¹² Charlet 1995, p. 121. Concerning the *epithalamium* for the wedding of Honorius and Maria, Charlet concludes that the presence of Ovid in Claudian's

attributed to banal expressions or poorly characterized thematic similarities.

In recent years, critics have confirmed their idea of the influence of Ovid on Claudian: we can recognize the close relationship between the two poets from the commentaries which have been flourishing in recent decades and from some more specific studies on Claudian's *carmina*.¹³

The question should be treated in a more ambitious work on the two authors, but in this paper I will focus on two *carmina minora*, where the presence of Ovid was wrongly overlooked by Eaton's purely classificatory work and, previously, by Birt's inevitably even more selective *apparatus of fontes and loci similes*.

*

The first example of Claudian's dependence on Ovid comes from *carm. min.* 9 (*Hystrix*). This is a poem of 48 hexameters, whose subject matter is a creature with many strange characteristics and bizarre behaviour,¹⁴ inspired by Claudian's interest in the *mirabilia* of nature and of the animal world in particular.¹⁵ The porcupine, inspiring awe especially for the contrast between

poem, although 'beaucoup moins massive' than one can infer from the *loci* examined by Eaton 1943, is still 'indubitable et quantitativement significative' (p. 131).

¹³ In this sense the example of *carm. min.* 22 is illuminating: the poem has been recognized as 'pezzo di bravura' by Consolino 2004, p. 156, who pointed out that Claudian ironically competed with his model, piling together 'the motifs that Ovid had scattered through many different elegies' (with a different understanding of the *carmen*, the allusions to Ovid – especially to *trist.* v. 6 – had been discussed, among others, also by Ricci 1998 and 2001, pp. 90-103, and Mulligan 2005).

¹⁴ Known in Linnaeus's classification (1758) by the scientific name *Hystrix cristata* – which must be distinguished from the so-called *Hystrix hirsutiostriis* widespread in Syria and in the Middle-East – the porcupine was already generally associated with Africa in ancient times (cf. Herod. iv. 192. 1-2, Plin. *nat. hist.* VIII. 125 ed Ael. *nat. an.* XII. 26), where it is now largely widespread (especially in central and Mediterranean coastal areas). Porcupines can be found in peninsular Italy, Sicily, and Elba island too, as well as in Albania and in the Balkan Peninsula.

¹⁵ The description of the unusual and bizarre aspects of nature is a privileged subject within the heterogeneous collection of the *carmina minora*, cf. Guipponi-Gineste 2010, pp. 201-280. For the 'animal-related' matter in Claudian I refer to my previous papers (Luceri 2001, 2005 and 2014).

its small size and the coat of spines that completely covers its back for strength and protection, is treated at length in a description inspired probably not so much by direct observation of a real animal as by Latin and Greek zoological sources such as Pliny the Elder, Aelian and Oppian of Apamea.

After a brief prologue – in lines 1-5 the poet declares that the proven existence of such an exceptional animal leads him to believe that even the *fabula* of the legendary Stymphalian birds is true¹⁶ – the poem goes through the physical and behavioural properties of the mammal (vv. 6-34), whose stratagems against predators are likened to those humans use in battle (vv. 35-43).

The final lines (vv. 44-48) praise the animal unreservedly: indeed, the porcupine is presented as a model of efficiency and self-sufficiency. According to the principle that every human activity derives from the imitation of nature, the porcupine is described as the source of the long-distance combat strategies and the ability with the bow mastered by peoples such the Cretans or the Parthians.

Through analogies, Claudian compares the strange rodent with common animals such as the pig, the dog and the hedgehog (mentioned, in that order, at lines 6, 8 and 17); at the same time, he takes inspiration from the epic tradition, comparing the animal with other well-known creatures of myth (thus it is not surprising that the poem includes both scientific descriptions of traits and sometimes picturesque details). In this web of literary allusions¹⁷ the poet evokes the memory of Ov. *met.* VIII. 284-289, where brief notations describe the arrival of the monstrous boar sent to the fields of Calydon by Artemis, who was angered with Oineus for his outrageous neglect:¹⁸

¹⁶ The mythological *exordium* has a double function: on the one hand, through Hellenistic doctrine it assigns great value to an apparently 'humble' subject; on the other hand it contributes to arouse curiosity about an animal which is not commonly observable and therefore is worthy of being subject matter for a poem.

¹⁷ The expressive influence of Virgil, Lucan and Statius can easily be recognized in the poem, as well remarked by Ricci 1981-1982, whose observations have inspired my following notes about the Ovidian model (for the structure of the *carmen* see, more generally, Guipponi-Gineste 2010, pp. 152-153).

¹⁸ This passage, as well as all subsequent quotations from the *Metamorphoses*, is taken from Anderson 1982, where v. 286 has been athetized (following Bent-

Sanguine et igne micant oculi, riget horrida cervix,
 et saetae similes rigidis hastilibus horrent.
 [Stantque velut vallum, velut alta hastilia saetae.]
 Fervida cum rauco latos stridore per amos
 spuma fluit, dentes aequantur dentibus Indis.
 Fulmen ab ore venit, frondes adflatibus ardent.

‘His eyes glowed with blood and fire; his neck was stiff and bristly; his bristles stood up like lines of stiff spear-shafts; <the bristles stand like a fortified wall, like high spears;> amidst deep, hoarse grunts the hot foam flecked his broad shoulders; his tusks were long as the Indian elephant’s, lightning flashed from his mouth, the herbage shrivelled beneath his breath.’¹⁹

Despite its modest size – repeatedly mentioned in the poem²⁰ – the porcupine has characteristics very similar to those of the mighty Ovidian beast.

A comparison so far-fetched is initially suggested to Claudian by the similarity between the long snout of the rodent and that of the pig (cf. *carm. min.* 9, 5-6 *Os longius illi / adsimulat porcum*).²¹ This supposed similarity, at first sight not so perspicuous,²² is evidently based on the false folk etymology that attributes the origin of the Greek term ὕσπριξ to the union of the noun θρίξ (‘hair’, then ‘quill’) with ὕς (‘pig, boar’), rather than with the element ὕσ- (‘above, upwards’), which refers to the direction of the modified hairs covering much of the mammal’s head, back and tail.²³

ley, Hollis 1970 instead considers v. 285 not to be genuine, while in the opinion of Tarrant 2004 both lines are spurious). Lamacchia 1956, p. 422, already suggested here the presence of ‘varianti alternative’ which may have been transmitted to Claudian too (the question is discussed in Hollis 1970, p. 72).

¹⁹ I have integrated the translation by Miller 1916, p. 427.

²⁰ Cf. vv. 8 *parva... vestigia*, 9-10 *exiguam... feram*, 28 *tantus in angusto strepitus furit*, 40 *brevis... bestia*.

²¹ Here and in the following passages the quotations from Claudian are taken from Hall 1985.

²² The rounded snout of the porcupine seems indeed more akin to that of the hare, as already noted by Barthius 1650, p. 1005: ‘Qui in his oris visuntur capite leporem referunt potius’.

²³ Cf. Buchholz 1965, p. 82, n. 80: the porcupine, in conclusion, has spines that are raised ‘upwards’ and simply unrelated to the pig’s bristles. The mistaken connection to the pig is confirmed in Latin by the name *porcus spinosus* normally qualifying the animal in *sermo vulgaris*: it is the origin of some resulting terms

The resemblance to the passage from the *Metamorphoses* shows that in Claudian's poem the porcupine's quilled back has characteristics similar to those of the coat of the Calydonian wild boar, whose skin is defined, once again in *met.* VIII, using the words *rigidis horrentia saetis / terga* (vv. 428-429). There are indeed good reasons to think that Claudian adapted the Ovidian comparison of the bristles with rigid darts (*met.* VIII. 285 *et saetae similes rigidis hastilibus horrent*) to the image of the long-range weapons which, on the basis of other zoological sources, reinforced the false myth of the rodent's being able to attack its enemies from a great distance.²⁴

We can find traces of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in Claudian's *carmen* in some specific correspondences between the two texts. Just as the boar's neck, as described by Ovid, looks bristly with sharp *saetae*, so the top of the porcupine's head bristles with shaggy hairs (in zoological terminology they are called *vibrissae*). The *vibrissae* are distinct from the quills: since they are usually erected along with the rest of its sharp 'arsenal' to protect, at least visually, the only exposed part of the animal, Claudian equates the *vibrissae* to horns, cf. vv. 6-7 *Mentitae cornua saetae / summa fronte rigent*.

The detail of the bloodshot, flame-darting eyes characterizing the Ovidian boar (*met.* VIII. 284 *Sanguine et igne micant oculi*) seems to inspire Claudian's notation of the small rodent's burning eyes²⁵ (cf. v. 7 *Oculis rubet igneus ardor*), although this metaphor is very common in poetry (it already appeared in Homer).²⁶

in Romance languages, such as 'porcospino' in Italian, 'porc-épic' in French, 'puerco espí' in Spanish, as well as 'porcupine' in English and 'Stachelschwein' in German.

²⁴ Cf. Ael. *nat. an.* I. 31 and XII. 26, Plin. *nat.* VIII. 125 and Opp. *Cyn.* III. 397-401.

²⁵ In the poem *de locusta* (*carm. min.* 24), Claudian follows the same pattern, making mention of the menacing eyes of the spiny lobster immediately after having described its head as bristling with antennae, cf. vv. 1-2 *Horret apex capitis; medio fera lumina surgunt / vertice* (see Luceri 2001, pp. 432-434).

²⁶ Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* XIII. 474 and *Od.* XIX. 446, Hes. *Sc.* 390 and, in Latin, Acc. *trag.* 443 R.³ [= *Meleag.*, fr. 4 K.] *frigit saetas rubore ex oculis fulgens flammeo* (after Ovid cf. also Stat. *Theb.* XI. 530-533 *Fulmineos veluti praeceps cum comminus egit / ira sues strictisque erexit tergora saetis: / igne tremunt oculi, lunataque dentibus uncis / ora sonant*).

The poet's imagination, however, is struck by the detail of the sharp spikes, which nature herself has given porcupines as a providential instrument to somewhat make up for their small size and ensure the survival of their species (cf. vv. 9-10 *Hanc tamen exiguam miro natura tueri / praesidio dignata feram*), as shown by the same 'technical' term *praesidium* in the zoological passage of Ov. *hal.* 7-9 *Omnibus ignotae mortis timor, omnibus hostem / praesidiumque datum sentire et noscere teli / vimque modumque sui*.²⁷

Claudian spends quite a large portion of the first part of his poem dealing with the porcupine's quills (vv. 10-16). In depicting them the poet seems to have been inspired by the Ovidian image of Cadmus transforming into a serpent (*met.* IV. 576-580), as well argued by Cecilia Pavarani,²⁸ and shows his typical Hellenistic taste and fondness for minute particulars and colours. Fascinated by the black and white bands on the rodent's sharp appendages (the quills of the *hystrix* are famously striated), he compares them to vegetal elements, cf. vv. 10-12: *stat corpore toto / silva minax, iaculisque rigens in proelia crescit / picturata seges*. This passage seems to be characterized by the particular ambiguity of the term *seges*. In first instance, the noun is associated with the semantic field of botany (in *met.* VIII. 290 *Is modo crescentes segetes proculcat in herba* the 'growing crops' are those destroyed by the Calydonian beast), then with military language, as suggested by the Argonautic story of the soldiers sprung up from the ground from the dragon teeth Jason sowed in the fallow land of Colchis (Claudian mentions them in *Get.* 26 *in segetem crescentis semina belli*).

In Claudian's poem another element deserves attention: the feature of the 'striated harvest' (v. 12 *picturata seges*) which stands on the rodent's back, 'bristling with darts' (v. 11 *iaculis... rigens*) just as bristles stand on the back of the wild boar in Ov. *met.* VIII. 285 *et saetae similes rigidis hastilibus horrent*. Through the metaphor of the *iaculi* the poet anticipates here what he will observe about the porcupine's use of its providential weapons at lines 17-34, where, according to popular belief,

²⁷ See Capponi 1972, p. 244.

²⁸ See above Pavarani, p. 132.

he erroneously thinks that the mammal is able to throw its quills deliberately and repeatedly²⁹ (v. 18 *Crebris propugnat iactibus ultro*), sometimes escaping and darting backwards in the manner of the Parthian archers (vv. 21-22) and sometimes responding to attacks as from an impregnable camp (vv. 22-24).

At lines 19-20 *tortumque per auras / evolat excusso nativum missile tergo* the quills are again explicitly compared to darts. When threatened by a danger, the porcupine voluntarily throws its quills against the pursuers with a shake of its back³⁰ not unlike the movement of the arm during the delivery phase of the spear or javelin throw (the so-called 'whiplash'), as we can assume from absolute ablative *excusso... tergo* which recalls, in my opinion, the expression *excusso lacerto* in Ov. *her.* 4. 43 *aut tremulum excusso iaculum vibrare lacerto* and especially in *Pont.* II. 9. 57 *excusso iaculum torquere lacerto* (with a similar use of *torqueo*).

The *hastilia* and the *lati armi* of the beast described by Ovid are recalled almost literally by Claudian's line 24, where the porcupine *et consanguineis hastilibus asperat armos*. Equally significant is the mention of the threatening noise that comes with the vibration of the rodent's back.³¹ Although hyperbolically assimilated to the din caused by the clash of armies in battle, the *raucus fragor* produced by the porcupine (cf. vv. 25-26 *militat omne ferae corpus vibrataque rauco / terga fragore sonant*) really resembles the gloomy growl emitted by the slaving mythical beast in Ov. *met.* VIII. 287-288 *Fervida cum rauco latos stridore per armos / spuma fluit*.

²⁹ Claudian and his sources (see above n. 24) seem not to know that the presence of quills on the ground in areas frequented by porcupines is accidental and caused by the animals bumping into bushes or similar obstacles.

³⁰ The porcupine, as the poet says, is guided not only by blind fear or fury, but also by a special kind of cunning. The *calliditas* (v. 29) suggests that the animal must follow the natural 'law of least effort' and use its weapons only if really useful to the preservation of its life (vv. 28-31). Thus the small *fera* (vv. 10 and 25) shows a primitive form of intelligence, while the impulse of the *sollertia* (μῆτις in Greek) hits the enemies with unerring and unparalleled expertise (vv. 32-34).

³¹ The detail is true, even if the odd sound that, in case of danger, the porcupine makes in order to frighten possible predators is caused by the rubbing of some stubby and hollow spines on its dorsal line and tail, rather than by a shake of its shoulders (the quills are moved by powerful subcutaneous muscles).

The expression Claudian uses to describe the bristling body of the porcupine – fully armed and therefore indeed comparable to a war-machine (v. 25 *militat omne ferae corpus*) – echoes, perhaps not accidentally, the famous elegiac *sententia* in Ov. *am.* I. 9. 1 *Militat omnis amans*. It is, in my view, a sort of tribute to the poet of Sulmo. In this way, through the allusions to the Calydonian boar, Claudian's meticulous description of the porcupine offers fame (v. 4 *cognitus*), like that of the fabulous creature of Ovid's myth, to the small, strange and ... little-known rodent.

*

Interesting echoes from Ovid's poetry can be found in another poem of the collection, *carm. min.* 28 (*Nilus*). As for the *Hystrix*, there is no evidence to make it possible to date the work.³²

The subject that the poet pursues – the two great mysteries related to the Nile, namely its unknown sources and the causes of its enigmatic summer flooding – is very common not only in poetry and in strictly scientific or geographical prose, but also in rhetorical school exercises.³³ The 42 hexameters on the Nile are so full of *topoi*³⁴ that we can legitimately define this poem, so to say, as a transposition into verse of the data collected from the previous doxographic tradition and largely filtered through the model of the famous lengthy speech about the Aegyptian river attributed to the priest Acoreus at lines 194-331 of the tenth book of Lucan's *Pharsalia*.³⁵

Critics do not unanimously agree on whether the poem is complete; some believe that such variation on the theme of the most extraordinary of the Aegyptian *mirabilia* could be part of a Claudian's larger project.³⁶

³² Some aspects of the poem have been recently discussed by Guipponi-Gineste 2010, pp. 241-247; Mandile 2011, pp. 43-49; Cazzuffi 2013, pp. 118-123; Garambois 2013, pp. 533-540. The poem – like *carm. min.* 9 and 49 – has been edited with translation and commentary by Luceri 2018 (forthcoming).

³³ Examples are shown by Cribiore 1996; see also Guipponi-Gineste 2010, p. 240, n. 173.

³⁴ See Hermann 1959, pp. 54-56.

³⁵ The comparisons between Lucan's book x and Claudian's poem are discussed in Mandile 2011, p. 45, n. 47.

³⁶ See Fo 1991, p. 55.

The poem starts with a short preamble (vv. 1-7) constructed around the subject of the paradoxical 'bliss' of the Egyptian peasants, whose hopes for a good harvest don't depend on the whims of the rains or of the winds. After this beginning Claudian, with a certain inexactness, follows the winding path of the Nile, focusing first on the question of the precise location of its sources (vv. 8-14), then that of the identification of the various races dwelling in the countries the river flows through (vv. 15-23). The description of the Nile's long journey is neither plausible nor indicative of respect for geography: coming from its spring in the very heart of Africa, the river apparently crosses 'the thousand kingdoms of the Ethiopians' next to the equatorial lands (vv. 16-18). Then, in succession, flowing through Meroe and the territories colonized by the Blemmyes up to torrid Syene (now Assuan, vv. 18-19) and the Libyan Fezzan ruled by the Garamantes (v. 20), the Nile touches the areas inhabited by the enigmatic *Girraei* (vv. 20-21) and by other ethnic groups that the poet prefers to identify not through their ethnonyms but through elaborate phrasings which were apparently perspicuous to his audience (vv. 21-23). Thus it flows through the countries of the so-called 'cave dwellers'³⁷ and 'ebony and ivory gatherers' (i.e. Ethiopian peoples whom Herodotus had already described as habitually carrying out such activities³⁸). Finally the river crosses the lands inhabited by people whose heads are surrounded by

³⁷ The periphrasis of v. 21 *qui vasta colit sub rupibus antra* applies to an ethnic group distinct from that of *Girraei*. It alludes to the people whose name – *Trogodytae* (or *Troglodytae*) – was commonly associated with the terms τρώγλη ('cave') and δύω ('to live in, to dwell') in reference to the practice, typical of many people of inner Africa, of living in caves dug into the rock. As inhabitants of the caves with primitive and bizarre costumes, the Troglodytes were known to Diodorus Siculus (III. 32-33) and Strabo (xvi. 4. 17). These authors held that they were located between Meroe and the shores of the Red Sea, cf. Diod. I. 30. 2 and I. 37. 8-9, and Strabo xvii. 1. 1-2 and xvii. 1. 53. Herodotus (IV. 183) placed them in the countries of the Γάραμαντες (South of the Libyan Sahara), without alluding to their caves, also known to Mela (I. 44) and Pliny the Elder (*nat.* v. 45), then to Solinus (31. 3) and Martianus Capella (vi. 674).

³⁸ The use of ebony bark and branches and the taking of ivory tusks from elephants (cf. v. 22 *qui ramos hebeni, dentes qui vellit eburnos*) were attributed to Ethiopian tribes located near Meroe as far back as Herodotus (III. 97), according to whom such materials, along with gold, constituted the tribute they annually paid to the Persians (with some slight deviations the same information is repeated by Pliny the Elder in *nat.* xii. 17-18).

a sort of crown of arrows (v. 23 *et gens compositis crinem vallata sagittis*).

As far back as the mid-seventeenth century Barthius attributed this particular hairstyle to Ethiopian-Nubian peoples.³⁹ Claudian mentions it in three other passages, where he personifies Meroe, the main political centre of the Nubians' ancient kingdom (*Hon. III cons.* 20-21 *et positus numen confessa pharetris / ignavas Meroe traxit de crine sagittas* and *Hon. nupt.* 222-223 *quantum crinita sagittis / attulit extremo Meroe circumflua Nilo*) or explicitly names their tribes, which lived in a large area in south-east Egypt and were defeated by Stilicho during the rebellion Gildo raised against Rome in AD 398 (*Stil. I.* 254 *parvis redimitus Nuba sagittis*).

This point deserves some consideration, especially in light of the textual transmission of line 23 of the poem on the Nile. All manuscripts read *velata* with a single exception: the thirteenth century codex Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vaticanus lat. 3289 (= R₃₁ in Hall 1985) which reads *vallata*. This reading, recently accepted by Hall 1985, was already known to Barthius 1650 (who praised it in his notes, but refused to accept it in his text, cf. p. 1027), but it made significant progress in the printed tradition due to Heinsius, who attributed it to Scaliger (probably Joseph Justus), citing however the Vatican codex.⁴⁰

The transmitted *velata*, still defended by Jeep and Birt, could be an easy trivialization,⁴¹ because *velo* is commonly used for ornaments of (not necessarily female) hair. Compare, elsewhere in the same Claudian, *Hon. nupt.* 299 *Haec quoque velati lauro myrtoque caneant* [scil. *Stilichonis milites*], *Manl. Theod.* 118 *Continuo frontem limbo velata pudicam* [scil. *Iustitia*], *Stil. I.* 156 *hic mitra velatus Arabs* and *II.* 375 *velati galeas lauro* (*velo* is associated with *crinis* in *Hon. VI cons.* 162-163 *Non illi madidum*

³⁹ See Barthius 1650, p. 1027: 'Nubianos aut Meroes incolas dicit, quorum alibi nec semel meminit, cum suis sibi crinalibus sagittis'.

⁴⁰ See Heinsius 1650, p. 259 [= 1665, p. 844]: 'Legendum *vallata* cum Scaligero et sec. Vatican.'. Indeed the *Plantiniana* – edited in 1603 by Raphelengius but clearly inspired by Joseph Justus Scaliger – reads *velata*.

⁴¹ The *religata* attributed by Heinsius 1650, p. 259 [= 1665, p. 844] to a lost codex of the humanist Buslidius is, to all appearances, a conjecture on the basis of *Hor. carm.* IV. 11. 4-5 *est hederæ vis / multa, qua crinis religata fulges*.

vulgaris harundine crinem / velat honos about the personified river Eridanus' crown of reeds). The participle *vallatus* is originally from military vocabulary, where it evokes boundary fortifications such as palisades. When associated with *crinis* or *caput*, the verb is quite appropriate to represent a martial look and a hairstyle which, as will be said later, would seem better suited to war than to aesthetics.⁴²

In Claudian's textual tradition the *vallata / velata* dualism is also found in *rapt.* III. 319-320 *quamvis... / ...rubro iaceat vallata profundo*. Here, according to the military metaphor of the natural defence provided by the sea (also in *Get.* 188 *vallata mari Scironia rupes*), the transmitted *vallata* – referred to Proserpina – is certainly preferable to the *velata* occurring in few manuscripts.⁴³

The exchange between the two participles is also found in two Ovidian passages that could have had a decisive influence on Claudian. The first one (*Pont.* I. 2. 21 *tecta rigent fixis veluti vallata sagittis*) is contained within the letter which Ovid addressed to Fabius Maximus at the beginning of the fourth winter he spent in Tomi *inter pericula*. The poet complains to his friend that the *Getae* are a people devoted to war and violence above all things, as can be inferred even from their dwellings, which are spiked with arrows on the rooftops. Such weapons, originally thrown at enemies in attacks, now form a dense palisade which, as a kind of *vallum*, are meant to protect the roofs. In this regard, this image is similar to that of the bristle-darts on the back of the boar in *met.* VIII. 286 *Stantque velut vallum, velut alta hastilia saetae* (this line, although now generally recognized as spurious, as I said above, may have been familiar to Claudian as Ovidian).

Instead of the phrase *velata sagittis*, which is attested in part of the tradition and accepted by Owen 1915, André 1977, Richmond 1990 and Helzle 2003, the alternative *vallata sagittis*, transmitted by other manuscripts, has been discussed and accepted in the recent commentaries of Gaertner 2005 (p. 149) and Tissol 2014 (p. 78), where there is, however, no comparison with Claudian's text. Gaertner, in particular, is keen to admit the expression *vallata sagittis* (already accepted by Scholte 1933), pointing out

⁴² See OLD s.v. 1c.

⁴³ See Onorato 2008, p. 340.

that the meaning of ‘decorate’ relevant to *velata* ‘hardly applies to the image of the rooftops bristling with arrows.’⁴⁴ To support his textual choice this editor finally recalls Ov. *her.* 4. 159 *avus radiis frontem vallatus acutis*, a verse which refers to the crown of sharp, leaping rays, one of the most renowned iconographic attributes of the Sun-god.⁴⁵

As originally suggested by Heinsius,⁴⁶ this Ovidian image could probably have inspired Claudian to fit the words *vallata sagittis* of *Pont.* 1. 2. 21 to the unusual hairstyle of the African tribes recalled in line 23 of his own poem.

In Claudian’s imagination the *sagittae*, neatly arranged in the hair of the weird *gens* (v. 23 *conpositis... sagittis*⁴⁷), on the one hand recalled the kind of *vallum* on the rooftops of the *Getae*, on the other hand the rayed crown of the Sun-god evoked by Ovid’s Phaedra in *her.* 4. 159. The arrows surrounding the heads of some African peoples such as the Nubians or Ethiopians⁴⁸ might seem to replicate the characteristic radial arrangement of the Sun-god’s emblem: we learn about this detail through Lucian⁴⁹ and Heliodorus⁵⁰ or through two reliefs of the Arch of Constantine,

⁴⁴ So Gaertner 2005, p. 149.

⁴⁵ Iconographic evidence is found in Letta 1988.

⁴⁶ See Heinsius 1650, p. 259 [= 1665, p. 844].

⁴⁷ For the verb in association with words such as *crinis* and similar, see ThL III, 2114, 65-74. The arrows were more likely affixed in a braid or a bandage wrapped in a circle around the head, as described by Gesner 1759, p. 77: ‘Utuntur ergo Aethiopes capite pro pharetra, quod fieri potuit vitta quadam s<ub> diademate latiusculo, et foraminibus quibusdam instructo, quibus sagittae ut vaginis induntur [*sic*] qua parte habent spicula, eminent pinnae, et formant coronas radiatas’.

⁴⁸ The custom of girding the head of arrows is attributed to Ethiopians by Prudence too, cf. *ham.* 497-498 *non decolor Indus / tempora pinnatis redimitus nigra sagittis*: in this passage the ethnonym *Indus* is equivalent to ‘Ethiopian’ for the common assimilation of the two peoples, cf. e.g. Serv. *ad Verg. georg.* II. 116 *Indiam omnem plagam Aethiopiae accipiamus* (for the matter see Schneider 2015, with reference to the previous bibliography).

⁴⁹ Cf. Lucian. *Salt.* 18 Αἰθίοπες δὲ γε καὶ πολεμοῦντες σὺν ὀρχήσει αὐτὸ δρῶσιν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἀφείη τὸ βέλος Αἰθίοψ ἀνὴρ ἀφελῶν τῆς κεφαλῆς – ταύτη γὰρ ἀντὶ φαρέτρας χρώνται περιδόντες αὐτῇ ἀκτινηδὸν τὰ βέλη – εἰ μὴ πρότερον ὀρχήσαιτο (‘The Ethiopians, moreover, even in waging war, do it dancing, and an Ethiopian may not let fly the shaft that he has taken from his head – for they use the head in place of a quiver, binding the shafts about it like rays – unless he has first danced’, transl. by Harmon 1936, p. 231).

⁵⁰ Cf. Heliod. IX. 19. 3-4 οἱ τῆς κινναμωμοφόρου [...] πλέγμα γὰρ τι κυκλοτερές

where the auxiliary African *sagittarii*, fighting against Maxentius' praetorians, are depicted crowned by a band from which the arrows that will be used against the enemy stick out just like rays.⁵¹

For the exotic people of the Nile the distinctive headpiece was not merely a decorative element, but also important for military protection, because the arrows could be used in battle.

*

After the section dedicated to the unanswered question of the summer floods (vv. 24-36), in which the poet, deriving his matter essentially from Seneca (cf. *nat.* iVa. 2. 28-29) and Lucan (x. 247-254), doesn't hesitate to appropriate the bizarre theory expounded by Diogenes of Apollonia (according to which the Nile collects the water evaporated by the Sun from every part of the world on the so-called 'Dog or Canicular days'), the poem ends with an original description.

With an interesting shift in perspective, Claudian goes on to describe the astounding landscape after the flood through the eyes of one of the *cultores* (v. 37) of the Nile valley. The surreal and almost dreamlike vision observed by a herdsman just awakened from a slumber induced by the unbearable summer heat gives the final verses an idyllic tone (vv. 37-42):

Defectis solitum referens cultoribus aequor
effluit Aegaeo stagnantior, acrior alto
Ionio seseque patentibus explicat arvis.
Fluctuat omnis ager; remis sonuere novalēs;
saepius, aestivo iaceat cum forte sopore,
cernit cum stabulis armenta natantia pastor.

'Then, bringing back to the fainting husbandmen its accustomed waters, it o'erflows ampler than the Aegean, fiercer

τῇ κεφαλῇ περιθέντες καὶ τοῦτο βέλεσι κατὰ τὸν κύκλον περιπείραντες τὸ μὲν ἐπτερωμένον τοῦ βέλους πρὸς τῇ κεφαλῇ περιτίθενται τὰς δὲ ἀκίδας οἷον ἀκτῖνας εἰς τὸ ἐκτὸς προβέβληνται. Κάντευθεν ἐξ ἐτοίμου παρὰ τὰς μάχας ὥσπερ ἐκ φαρέτρας ἀφαιρῶν ἕκαστος ('the soldiers of the cinnamon country [...] wear a round wreath upon their head in which the arrows are set, the feathers turned inwards and the points hanging out like the beams of the sun. In skirmish they take out the arrows therefrom as readily as from a quiver', transl. by Wright 1923, p. 276).

⁵¹ See L'Orange 1934 and 1936.

than the deep Ionian, and spreads itself over the low-lying country. All the fields are aswim; plough-land sounds to the beat of the oar, and full often the shepherd, o'ercome with summer's heat, wakes to see flocks and fold carried away by the flood.'⁵²

After the traditional association between the Nile and the sea (vv. 37-39) the poet shows the radical transformation of the Egyptian countryside, caused by the Nile's prodigious and drastic rise. The effects of the floods, already mentioned in the most ancient hieroglyphic texts and observed with wonder by writers, scientists and travellers across the ages, provide Claudian with an opportunity to outline a paradoxical framework of the phenomenon, according to a common iconographic theme,⁵³ which is a topic not only in literature and in poetry, but also in mosaics and painting.⁵⁴

The scene of the land of Egypt almost entirely turned into a flooded plain beaten by the oars of the boats inspires, for example, Verg. *georg.* IV. 287-289 *Nam qua Pellaei gens fortunata Canopi / accolit effuso stagnantem flumine Nilum / et circum pictis vehitur sua rura phaselis* which, in turn, offered Claudian the opening *makarismós*: such images are likewise found in Seneca's scientific prose⁵⁵ and would be recalled even in rhetorical exercises of the Second Sophistry (cf. Philostr. *Im.* 1. 5 and *Him. Or.* 14. 8), often inspiring vivid descriptions.⁵⁶

⁵² Transl. by Platnauer 1922, p. 235.

⁵³ See Bonneau 1964, p. 95, Cauderlier 1989, pp. 106-107 and Cribiore 1996, p. 523, n. 79.

⁵⁴ See Versluys 2002 and Bricault – Versluys – Meyboom 2007.

⁵⁵ Cf. Sen. *nat.* IVa. 2. 11 *Illa facies pulcherrima est cum iam se in agros Nilus ingessit: latent campi opertaeque sunt valles, oppida insularum modo extant, nullum mediterraneis nisi per navigia commercium est maiorque est laetitia gentibus quo minus terrarum suarum vident* ('It is a beautiful sight when the Nile has spread itself over the fields: the plains lie hidden, the valleys are covered over, towns stand out like islands. In the interior of the country there is no communication except by boat. The less people see of their land the happier they are', transl. by Corcoran 1972, p. 29).

⁵⁶ So the image of the fishing boats that, together with sea creatures, take possession of the space previously occupied by fields which were constantly parched by the sun and ploughed by oxen, cf. e.g. Ach. Tat. IV. 12. 1 *καὶ ἐστὶ τὸ θέαμα καινόν, ναῦς ὁμοῦ καὶ δίκελλα, κώπη καὶ ἄροθρον, πηδάλιον καὶ πτύον, ναυτῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ γεωργῶν καταγωγή, ἰχθύων ὁμοῦ καὶ βοῶν* ('it is a strange sight to see

In spite of the topical subject matter here Claudian has some happy inspirations as we may infer from v. 40 *Fluctuat omnis ager; remis sonuere novales*, where the *mirabile* is well painted by the oxymoronic combination of exquisitely 'georgic' words (*ager* and *novales*) with typical seafaring terminology (*fluctuat* and *remis*). The countryside, at first motionless, once overwhelmed by the wave of flood, seems to sway, while the fallow land, usually silent waiting to be cultivated again, resounds with the noise of the oars of the small boats sailing through the waters. The hexameter starts with a suggestion, if only a formal one, from Verg. *georg.* II. 281-282 *ac late fluctuat omnis / aere renidenti tellus* and closes with a vague imitation from Ov. *met.* I. 294 *et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper ararat*.⁵⁷ In my view, here too the echo from Ovid is not accidental but serves to evoke, at least approximately, the famous scene of the landscape after the flood sent by Jupiter to destroy humanity in *met.* I. 291-303:⁵⁸

Iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant:
omnia pontus erant, deerant quoque litora ponto.
Occupat hic collem, cumba sedet alter adunca
et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper ararat;
ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae
navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo;
figitur in viridi, si fors tulit, ancora prato,
aut subiecta terunt curvae vineta carinae,
et, modo qua graciles gramen carpsere capellae,
nunc ibi deformes ponunt sua corpora phocae.
Mirantur sub aqua lucos urbesque domosque
Nereides, silvasque tenent delphines et altis
incursant ramis agitataque robora pulsant.

close together the boat and the hoe, the oar and the plough, the rudder and the winnowing-fan, the meeting-place of sailors and husbandmen, of fishes and oxen', transl. by Gaselee 1917, p. 215) and Ael. *nat. an.* x. 43 *Διὰ τοῦ θέρους τοῦ πυρωδεστάτου τὰ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων πεδία ὁ Νεῖλος ἐπικλύσας ὅλην μὲν αὐτοῖς θαλάττης ἡπλωμένης καὶ λείας δίδωσι, καὶ ἀλιεύουσι κατὰ τῆς τέως ἀρουμένης Αἰγύπτου, καὶ πλέουσι σκάφαις ἐς ταύτην τὴν ὥραν καὶ τήνδε τὴν ἐπιδημίαν τοῦ ποταμοῦ πεποιημέναις* ('All through the hottest summer the Nile in flood gives the fields of Egypt the appearance of a calm stretch of open sea, and over what was till then ploughland there the Egyptians fish and sail in boats manufactured against that season and against this visitation by the river', transl. by Scholfield 1959, p. 339).

⁵⁷ The *locus* is already cited by Birt 1892, p. 317.

⁵⁸ On the *Fortleben* of Ovidian description see Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990, pp. 177-210 (on this passage, see above Pavarani, p. 135 too).

‘And now the sea and land have no distinction. All is sea, and a sea without a shore. Here one man seeks a hill-top in his flight; another sits in his curved skiff, plying the oars where lately he has plowed; one sails over his fields of grain or the roof of his buried farmhouse, and one takes fish caught in the elm-tree’s top. And sometimes it chanced that an anchor was embedded in a grassy meadow, or the curving keels brushed over the vineyard tops. And where but now the slender goats had browsed, the ugly sea-calves rested. The Nereids are amazed to see beneath the waters groves and cities and the haunts of men. The dolphins invade the woods, brushing against the high branches, and shake the oak-trees as they knock against them in their course.’⁵⁹

The detail of the *ager* rippling with herds and of the stables floating on the flooded plains celebrates, as in Ovid, the definitive triumph of Water on Earth and closes the poem with an almost ‘epigrammatic’ *pointe*: in some ways, this *aprosdoketon* is the last and the most incredible *thaumastón* of the undoubtedly paradoxical Nile.

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⁵⁹ Transl. by Miller 1916, p. 23.

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Abstract

The paper focuses on two Claudian's *carmina minora*, where the presence of Ovid has been often overlooked by critics. In *carm. min.* 9 (*Hystrix*), through allusions to the monstrous Calydonian boar described by Ovid (*met.* VIII. 284-289), Claudian represents the small porcupine like the fabulous creature of Ovidian myth. In *carm. min.* 28 (*Nilus*) the final scene of the Egyptian land almost entirely turned into a flooded plain (vv. 37-42) evokes, at least approximately, the famous description of the landscape after the flood sent by Jupiter to destroy humanity in *Ov. met.* I. 291-303. Moreover, at v. 23 the reading *vallata* – attested just in one manuscript – may be defended against the vulgate *velata*, in comparing two Ovidian passages: in Claudian the weird hairstyle of Nubian peoples on the one hand recalls the kind of *vallum* on the rooftops of the *Getae* (*Ov. Pont.* I. 2. 21), on the other hand the rayed crown of the Son-god evoked by Phaedra (*Ov. her.* 4. 159).

RIVALISER AVEC OVIDE
(PRESQUE) SANS OVIDE
À PROPOS DE CLAUDIEN, *GIGANTOMACHIE*
(*CARM. MIN.* 53), VV. 91-113

Le thème de la gigantomachie, guerre des Géants, souvent confondus avec les Titans, contre Jupiter et les dieux d'en-haut, revient constamment dans la poésie de Claudien, non pas comme un thème rhétorique vide, mais comme un thème obsessionnel qui symbolise sa conception du monde : ¹ cette lutte des forces chthoniennes contre le monde de la lumière, du désordre et du Mal contre l'ordre ouranien et le Bien représente pour lui, comme pour ses contemporains qui pouvaient voir sur certaines monnaies d'or la *calcatio* par l'empereur victorieux d'un barbare dont le corps s'achevait en queues de serpent (ou d'un serpent à tête de barbare), la lutte des barbares contre l'Empire romain. À côté de très nombreuses allusions ou références dans l'ensemble de son œuvre poétique,² Claudien a composé (ou seulement commencé ?) une *Gigantomachie* latine (*carm. min.* 53) et une *Gigantomachie grecque*.³

¹ Contrairement à ce qu'en dit Hardie 1986, p. 89. Voir ce que j'en ai écrit dans mon édition du *De raptu Proserpinae* (Charlet 1991), en particulier pp. 94-97 (n. compl. 1 de la p. 11), pp. 114-115 (n. compl. 1 de la p. 17) et pp. 176-177 (n. compl. 5 de la p. 75 et n. compl. 3 de la p. 76) et dans la discussion de ma contribution aux Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique de la Fondation Hardt (Charlet 2013), pp. 355-356.

² *Rapt.* I. 42-47 ; I. 153-159 ; II. 157-161 ; III. 122-123 ; III. 182-188 ; III. 196-197 ; III. 337-356 ; *Hon.* III cons. 159-162 ; *Ruf.* II. 523-526 ; *Hon.* IV cons. 534-535 ; *Get.* 62-76 et 342-343 ; *praef. Hon.* VI cons. 17-20, 44-45 et 184-186 ; *carm. min.* 17. 31-32 et 31. 25-28.

³ Sur la *Gigantomachie* latine, Romano 1979. Sur la *Gigantomachie grecque*, Giomi 2003 (je n'ai pu avoir accès à sa 'tesi di laurea', *La Gigantomachia greca di Claudiano*, Università di Firenze 1991) ; González i Senmarti 1992 ; Lavagnini 1952 ; Livrea 1998 et 2000 ; Ludwig 1881 ; Martinelli 1951 ; Zamora 1993

Dans ses *Métamorphoses*, Ovide n'a abordé que très rapidement le thème de la gigantomachie (*met.* I. 151-162) et on ne relève aucun point de contact précis et significatif entre la présentation d'Ovide et les deux *Gigantomachies* de Claudien. Chez Ovide, les Géants entassent des montagnes pour conquérir le royaume du ciel (*regnum caeleste*, I. 151-153) ; de sa foudre, le Père tout-puissant fracasse ces montagnes (faisant s'écrouler le Pélion posé sur l'Ossa) et les Géants qui les escaladaient (I. 154-156). La Terre, imbibée du sang de ses enfants, en fait d'autres êtres à apparence humaine (I. 157-160 : *in faciem uertisse hominum*). Cette race, issue du sang, méprise les dieux et se montre avide de carnages (I. 160-162). Le premier fragment de la *Gigantomachie* grecque est un proème (vv. 1-17) ; le second (vv. 18-77) présente une série de combats : un géant brandit un pin contre Zeus ; un autre s'attaque au Soleil ; un géant assoiffé assèche la mer ; deux Géants affrontent Athéna armée de la tête de la Gorgone ; Cypris n'utilise d'autre arme que de sa beauté ; Typhon s'oppose à Poséidon et Encelade arrache une île pour la projeter sur la demeure de Zeus. Dans la *Gigantomachie* latine, la Terre enfante les Géants et les lance contre le ciel (vv. 1-5). Échappé de l'Érèbe, ils provoquent les dieux d'en-haut et sèment la confusion dans le ciel (vv. 6-12). La Terre exhorte ses enfants à vaincre les dieux d'en-haut (vv. 12-35). À ces mots, les Géants croient avoir déjà vaincu les dieux (vv. 36-41). Mais Iris convoque tous les êtres célestes dans le palais de Jupiter (vv. 42-52). Le Père céleste exhorte les dieux à exterminer les fils de la Terre (vv. 52-59) et le combat commence (vv. 60-65). Certains Géants brandissent des montagnes et les projettent (vv. 66-74). Mars s'élance et transperce Pélorus (vv. 75-84). Mimas veut secourir son frère en projetant l'île de Lemnos, mais la javeline de Mars lui ouvre la tête (vv. 85-91). Pallas-Minerve intervient alors et sa Gorgone pétrifie plusieurs Géants : c'est le passage qui va nous retenir (vv. 91-113). Porphyriion tente d'arracher Délos pour la lancer contre le monde d'en-haut, et Délos, éperdue, implore son Apollon (vv. 114-128). C'est au milieu de cette prière et du v. 128 que s'arrête le texte qui nous est parvenu.

(je n'ai pas eu accès à la 'memoria de Licenciatura' du même : *Sobre la Gigantomaquia griega del Matr. BN. 4 691*, Univ. Compl. Madrid 1991).

Comme on le voit, le second fragment de la *Gigantomachie* grecque présente une série de combats quasi singuliers, avec une intervention de Cypris (Aphrodite) si remarquable que Michel Apostolios l'a transcrite dans son anthologie intitulée *Violarium* et que son frère Arsène Apostolios l'a lui aussi recopiée, mais sans le moindre point commun avec le bref récit ovidien. Dans la *Gigantomachie* latine, la Terre intervient, mais à l'origine du conflit et non, comme chez Ovide, à la fin, pour métamorphoser le sang de ses enfants tués en une nouvelle race d'humains sanguinaires. Les Géants arrachent les montagnes, dont l'Ossa (vv. 66-73, en particulier v. 68), pour les projeter contre les dieux d'en-haut, alors que chez Ovide, ils les entassent pour escalader le ciel (*met.* I. 153 *congestos struxisse... montes*) et le Pélion apparaîtrait, selon la tradition, comme posé sur l'Ossa (*met.* I. 155)⁴ tandis que Jupiter foudroie cette masse et les Géants qui l'escaladent (*met.* I. 154-156). Les deux versions sont si différentes que leur seul point de contact littéral est la mention archi-traditionnelle de l'Ossa, et encore, non associé au Pélion dans ce poème de Claudien, à la différence d'Ovide... et d'autres poèmes de Claudien.

Pourtant, dans le récit de Claudien qui se démarque complètement de celui d'Ovide, un passage éveille immanquablement des résonances ovidiennes, celui de la pétrification de plusieurs Géants par la Gorgone que porte Minerve-Pallas, la Tritonienne, *Gig.* (*carm. min.* 53) 91-113 :⁵

Tritonia uirgo

prosilat ostendens rutila cum Gorgone pectus.
Aspectu contenta suo, non utitur hasta –
nam satis est uidisse semel – primumque furentem
longius in faciem saxi Pallanta reformat. 95
Ille procul subitis fixus sine uulnere nodis,
ut se letifero sensit durescere uisu

⁴ Sur le topos gigantomachique du Pélion entassé sur l'Ossa, outre Claud. *Hon.* IV *Cons.* 108 et *Stil.* I. 12 (avec la même clause que chez Ovide *Pelion Ossae*) ainsi que *Get.* 74-76 et bien sûr Ou. *met.* I. 155 : Verg. *georg.* I. 281 ; Prop. II. 1. 9-20 ; Hor. *carm.* III. 4. 52 ; Ou. *am.* II. 1. 13-14 ; *Pont.* II. 2. 9 ; *fast.* III. 441 ; Sen. *Ag.* 338 et *Thy.* 812 ; Lucan. VI. 411-412 ; Sil. III. 495 ; Stat. *silu.* III. 2. 65 et *Theb.* VIII. 79.

⁵ Je donne le texte de mon édition (T. IV à paraître à la C. U. F., les Belles Lettres) en indiquant en notes les différences avec l'édition de Hall 1985, p. 408.

(et steterat iam paene lapis), ‘quo uertimur ?’, inquit,
 ‘quae serpit per membra silex ? Quis torpor inertem
 marmorea me peste ligat ?’ Vix pauca locutus, 100
 quod timuit, iam totus erat saeuusque Damastor,
 ad depellendos iaculum cum quaereret hostes,
 germani rigidum misit pro rupe cadauer.
 Hic uero interitum fratris miratus Echion,
 inscius auctorem dum uult temptare nocendo, 105
 te, dea, respexit, solam quam cernere nulli
 bis licuit. Meruit sublata audacia poenas
 et didicit cum morte deam. Sed turbidus ira
 Pallaneus,⁶ oculis auersa⁷ tuentibus atrox,
 ingreditur caecasque manus in Pallada tendit. 110
 Hunc mucrone ferit dea comminus ; ac simul angues
 Gorgoneo riguere gelu corpusque per unum
 pars moritur ferro, partes periere uidendo.

‘La vierge du Triton

Bondit, exhibant sa poitrine où brille la Gorgone,
 Se contentant de se montrer sans user de sa lance :
 Car il suffit de la voir une fois. Et Pallas en fureur
 Est le premier transformé à distance en l’aspect
 [d’une roche. 95
 Sans blessure fixé de loin par des nœuds imprévus,
 Quand il se sent durcir sous la vision mortifère,
 (Et il était déjà presque une pierre), ‘En quoi suis-je
 [changé’, dit-il,
 Et quel silex serpente dans mon corps ?
 [Quelle torpeur me lie,
 Inerte, par un mal pétrifiant ?’ À peine a-t-il un
 [peu parlé 100
 Qu’il est déjà totalement ce qu’il a craint.
 [Le cruel Damastor,
 Cherchant un trait pour repousser les ennemis,
 Lança, en guise de rocher, le cadavre raidi d’un frère.

⁶ Je suis l’orthographe des manuscrits les plus anciens, la forme *Pallaneus* n’étant donnée que par la correction du manuscrit R, alors que les manuscrits des XII^e-XIII^e s. donnent une forme aberrante, *Palladiis*, mais qui confirme le vocalisme a de la deuxième voyelle. La forme de ce nom propre sera discutée ci-dessous.

⁷ Avec les éditeurs, je choisis, pour des raisons de sens évidentes, la leçon minoritaire *auersa* (donnée par L et par un manuscrit du milieu du XV^e siècle, K₄ pour Hall, A pour Birt et K₆ pour moi), la confusion entre *auersa* et *aduersa* étant très fréquente.

Alors Echion, étonné par la mort de son frère,
En voulant s'attaquer et nuire à l'auteur qu'il ignore, 105
S'est retourné, déesse, pour te voir, toi seule que
[personne
Ne peut apercevoir deux fois : son audace a subi la
[peine méritée
Et par la mort il apprit à connaître la déesse.
[Agité de colère,
L'horrible Pallanée, à l'opposé tournant ses yeux,
S'avance et tend contre Pallas ses mains aveugles. 110
La déesse, de près, le frappe de sa pique, et aussitôt
[que ses serpents
Se sont raidis, glacés par la Gorgone, en un seul corps
Une partie meurt sous le fer, d'autres périssent par
[la vue.'

Claudien présente trois combats. C'est le premier, celui du Géant Pallas, beaucoup plus détaillé, qui retiendra notre attention, les épisodes d'Echion et de Pallanée⁸ étant beaucoup plus limités. Echion est présenté comme voulant venger son frère et son châ-timent, la mort par pétrification, est plus affirmée que décrite : l'épisode rappelle seulement qu'on ne saurait impunément voir deux fois Pallas et sa Gorgone ! Quant au sort de Pallanée, mal-gré le stratagème qu'il emploie, il concentre celui des deux Géants qui, dans la *Gigantomachie* grecque, ont voulu s'en prendre à Athéna-Pallas (*Gig. gr.* 35-42) : le premier fut transpercé par la lance de la déesse, alors que le second fut pétrifié par sa Gorgone. Dans la *Gigantomachie* latine, Pallanée, être double comme tous les Géants fils de la Terre dont le corps d'homme se termine par deux serpents qui prolongent leurs jambes,⁹ subit à lui seul les deux châ-timents : sa partie humaine périt sous la lance de Minerve, alors que ses deux (autres) parties, animales celles-là (deux ser-pents), sont pétrifiées par la vue de la Gorgone. En revanche, dans le cas de Pallas (homonyme de la déesse qu'il assaille !), Claudien

⁸ Je traduis la forme de loin la mieux attestée dans la tradition manuscrite, *Pallaneus*, contre *Palleneus*, à peine attesté (*Pp.c.*). J'y vois une intention : ce *Pallaneus*, après *Pallas*, veut s'en prendre à... Pallas-Athéna (Minerve) ! C'est une reduplication (originale, puisque Claudien semble le seul à citer ce nom de Géant) de Pallas le Géant.

⁹ Voir *Gig. (carm. min. 53)* 80-81, à propos de Pélorus : *femorum qua fine uolutus / duplex semiferis connectitur ilibus anguis*.

se distingue de la tradition gigantomachique dans laquelle il s'inscrit : on y lit qu'Athéna tua un Géant nommé Pallas ;¹⁰ Apollodore précise même qu'il fut écorché par la déesse (I. 6. 2) et, pour Festus, le meurtre du Géant Pallas est l'une des raisons pour lesquelles Minerve (Athéna) a reçu cet autre nom.¹¹ Mais, en l'état de notre documentation, seul Claudien, imité par Sidoine Apollinaire,¹² attribue cette mort à une pétrification, ce qui n'est pas sa seule originalité,¹³ et il s'attarde sur le processus de pétrification du Géant pour décrire, à la manière d'Ovide qui est maintes fois revenu sur ce thème dans les *Métamorphoses*, une véritable métamorphose.

Mais, si les *Métamorphoses* fournissaient à Claudien de nombreuses occasions de rivaliser avec elles, les éditions annotées ou commentées de Claudien, d'Heinsius (1650) à Maria Lisa Ricci,¹⁴ ne proposent pour notre passage aucun parallèle précis avec Ovide, alors qu'il s'ouvre par une belle *iunctura* virgilienne (*Tritonia uirgo*, Verg. *Aen.* XI. 483), tandis qu'Ovide dit simplement *Tritonia*. Et de fait, on n'y relève quasiment pas d'expressions ovidiennes originales. Ainsi, on ne considérera pas comme spécifiquement ovidien le fait de placer en fin d'hexamètre *furentem* (v. 94 et *met.* XIII. 322) ou *inertem* (v. 99 et *met.* XIII. 76),¹⁵

¹⁰ Voir RE XVIII. 3, *Pallas* 2, col. 235 : Hyg. *fab. praef.* 4 ; *Schol. Hom. Il.* I. 200 et *Od.* I. 252 ; Souda, *Etym. M.* et Photius, *s.u.*

¹¹ Fest. 220 M.-246 L : *Minerua dicta est quod Pallantem Gigantem interfecerit uel [...]*.

¹² *Carm.* 15. 17-31 (*Épithalame de Polémius et Araneola*), en particulier vv. 23-24.

¹³ On notera aussi le nom du Géant Damastor (v. 101), qui ne semble pas apparaître avant lui (repris par Sidoine, peut-être avec une variante, en *carm.* 15. 20).

¹⁴ Ricci 2001, pp. 308-311 pour le passage qui nous concerne. La dissertation de Eaton 1943 ne relève (pp. 135-136) que quatre rapprochements entre Ovide et la *Gigantomachie latine*, dont un seul avec les *Métamorphoses* : v. 48 *e naribus efflant* et *met.* II. 85 *et naribus efflant* (reprise d'une clause peut-être suggérée par Verg. *Aen.* XII. 115 *elatis paribus efflant*) ; l'auteur n'a trouvé aucun écho d'Ovide dans notre passage. J'avais précédemment étudié la lecture d'Ovide dans l'*Épithalame d'Honorius*, cf. Charlet 1995.

¹⁵ Le rapprochement serait un peu moins hasardeux avec la forme *inerti* en fin de *met.* v. 225 puisqu'il s'agit, comme nous le verrons plus loin, d'un développement sur des pétrifications par Persée. De même, dans la suite du passage, *ira* à la fin du v. 108, place qu'Ovide affectionne pour ce mot (mais il n'est pas le seul !), e.g. *met.* VII. 413 : *rabida qui concitus ira* à propos de Cerbère. S'il n'y a pas lieu de relever l'expression très banale *manus tendere*, la reprise de

d'user de l'adjectif composé *letifer*, que Virgile a transmis à l'épopée latine (v. 97 et *met.* VIII. 362 ou XII. 606 ; mais cf. Verg. *Aen.* x. 169) ou même la clausule banale *pauca locutus* (v. 100 et *met.* VIII. 705 [cf. VII. 674]). Plus intéressante, même si l'on ne peut y voir une reprise certaine d'Ovide, est l'expression *sine uulnere* devant le dernier pied de l'hexamètre (v. 96), à comparer avec *met.* XI. 9 *notam sine uulnere fecit* à propos du thyrses qui laissa une empreinte sur la bouche d'Orphée sans le blesser, Ou *met.* XIII. 267 à propos d'Ajax fils de Télamon qui échappe à la blessure : *et habet sine uulnere corpus*. De même, la reprise du verbe *reformare* (v. 95 et *met.* XI. 254 à propos de Thétis présentée par Protée : *dum quod fuit ante reformet*), sans être totalement probante, peut être considérée comme significative dans un contexte de métamorphose. Le verbe *serpere*, qui décrit le mouvement du lierre qui emprisonne les rames des marins tyrrhéniens ou de l'écorce qui recouvre Dryope,¹⁶ exprime ici (v. 99) l'envahissement des membres de Pallas par l'élément minéral. De même encore certaines notations temporelles peuvent, sans constituer des reprises précises, évoquer des stylèmes ovidiens dans les descriptions de métamorphoses. On pense à l'emploi des adverbes *iam* (v. 98 et 101) pour marquer la métamorphose en cours¹⁷ ou *uix* (v. 100) pour en marquer la soudaineté.¹⁸ Ou encore à une subordonnée temporelle qui, avec le verbe *sentire* suivi d'un infinitif, marque une prise de conscience : on rapprochera le v. 97 (*ut sensit durescere*) par exemple d'Ovide, *met.* VI. 601 *Vt sensit tetigisse domum*. Comme on le voit, un certain nombre

la jonction *caecas manus* (v. 110 et *met.* XII. 492-493, à propos du combat de Cénée contre un centaure : *caecamque in uiscera mouit / Versauitque manum*) est plus signifiante. Peut-être le v. 111 (*Hunc mucrone ferit dea comminus*) fait-il écho à *met.* III. 119 *comminus ense ferit*, mais l'expression *comminus ferire* est relativement banale.

¹⁶ Respectivement *met.* III. 664-665 *impediunt hederæ remos nexuque recuruo / serpunt* ; IX. 388-389 *per candida mollis / colla liber serpit*.

¹⁷ Ce type d'emploi est extrêmement fréquent dans les *Métamorphoses*. Pour m'en tenir dans des exemples proches de notre contexte, je citerai *met.* II. 661-663 (*Iam mihi subduci facies humana uidetur / iam... iam... / in equam... uertor*) ou 830 *Saxum iam colla tenebat*, ou encore III. 678 *Iam non esse manus, iam pinnae posse uocari*.

¹⁸ Ici encore les exemples abondent. À propos de paroles, *met.* VIII. 142 *Vix dixerat* et pour marquer le début d'une métamorphose, XIII. 944 *Vix bene combiberant*.

de mots, d'expressions ou de stylèmes, sans imiter précisément tel passage d'Ovide, s'insèrent dans une stylistique de la métamorphose et lui donnent une coloration ovidienne diffuse.

En effet, dans le dernier exemple, le verbe complément de *sensit* exprime explicitement la métamorphose de Pallas : *durescere*. Et l'on songe précisément à l'épisode de Périmèle au livre VIII des *Métamorphoses*, en particulier aux vv. 607-608 : *Dumque ea contrecto, totum durescere sensi / corpus*. Mais il n'est pas sûr que nous tenions une référence précise et indiscutable à Ovide, car ces vers ne sont pas transmis par toute la tradition manuscrite et les éditeurs les jugent généralement interpolés :¹⁹ ils pourraient donc avoir été écrits après ceux de Claudien. Néanmoins le verbe *durescere*, à côté de très nombreux verbes en *-sco* qui marquent le procès de la métamorphose en cours d'accomplissement,²⁰ est bien attesté chez Ovide, à propos de la métamorphose de la fille de Cécrops Aglauros (*met.* II. 831 *oraque duruerant*) ou de la mutation du corail qui à l'air, d'herbe molle, devient minéral (*met.* XV. 417 *durescit ; mollis fuit herba sub undis*) et l'on relève aussi des parallèles avec les synonymes (*de*)*rigescere* : e. g. *met.* IV. 555 (à propos d'une compagne d'Ino) *sensit riguisse lacertos* ; v. 186, 209 et 233 (sous l'action de la Gorgone) *dextera deriguit ... biscentum riguerunt corpora uisa ... Deriguit saxoque oculorum induit umor* ; VII. 115 *Deriguere metu Minyae* ; IX. 357-358 *materna rigescere sentit / Vbera* ; XIV. 564 *rigescere puppem* (à propos du navire Alcinoos) ; XIV. 754 *Deriguere oculi* (à propos d'Anaxarète dont nous allons reparler).

¹⁹ À moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'une seconde rédaction, voir l'édition de W. S. Anderson (Leipzig, Teubner 1977, p. 194), sur l'apparat critique duquel je me fonde : donnés par F² *in ras*. PWehv et Planude, ainsi qu'en marge par E² et N³, ils sont omis par ELMNU. Heinsius les avait jugés interpolés ; Anderson écrit : *bic quoque alii interpolationem, alii duplicem recensionem suspicient*.

²⁰ À commencer par *crescere*, dont de nombreux emplois chez Ovide se réfèrent à une métamorphose en cours : e. g. *met.* I. 550 (à propos de Daphné) *In frondem crines, in ramos brachia crescunt* ; VIII. 716 *crescente* à propos de la métamorphose de Philémon et Baucis ; XV. 434 *crescendo mutat* (pour *concrecere*, *met.* v. 202 à propos de la Gorgone ; *increscere*, *met.* XIV. 565 ; *subcrescit*, *met.* IX. 353). Ovide aime associer ces verbes au verbe *sentio* (prise de conscience de la mutation, de la métamorphose en cours de réalisation) : e. g. *met.* II. 230 (à propos du char de Phaéton) *candescere sentit* ; IV. 577 *increscere sentit* ; XIV. 282 (à propos de Macarée) *osque meum occallescere sensi* ; XV. 847 *ignescere sensit* (à propos de la comète de César).

Au-delà des mots et expressions dont nous venons de parler, on peut dire qu'à peu près tous les termes ou locutions qui évoquent la pétrification (thème éminemment ovidien !) se lisent dans les *Métamorphoses*, mais se trouvent ici intégrés à une autre structure de phrase, à commencer par les mots qui désignent le monde minéral : *saxum* (v. 95), *lapis* (v. 98), *silex* (v. 99) et le marbre (v. 100 *marmorea*), Claudien ayant ajouté *rupes*, mais en dehors de la métamorphose proprement dite.²¹ Pour cette *copia uerborum*, Claudien pouvait rivaliser avec l'épisode où Persée pétrifie ses ennemis en leur montrant la tête de Méduse (*met.* v. 149-250) :

- v. 183 *in hoc haesit signum de marmore gestu* (cf. v. 206 *Marmoreoque... in ore* et 234 *uultusque in marmore supplex*)²²
 v. 199 *Immotusque silex armataque mansit imago* (et vv. 248-249 *oraeque regis / Ore Medusaeo silicem sine sanguine fecit*)²³
 v. 202 *Gorgone conspecta saxo concreuit oborto*²⁴

Pour *lapis*, on citera par exemple *met.* XI. 59-60 et XII. 23 à propos d'un serpent :²⁵ *in lapidem rictus serpentis apertos / Congelat et Fit lapis et seruat serpentis imagine saxum.*

Si l'emploi de *serpere* est un peu différent chez Ovide,²⁶ *torpor*, dans le même v. 99 appartient bien au vocabulaire de la métamorphose ovidienne. Ainsi à propos de Daphné (*met.* I. 548) :

²¹ V. 103 *pro rupe* (en guise de projectile). Chez Ovide, *rupes* ne désigne pas le résultat d'une métamorphose ; mais ce poète ajoute *scopulum* pour Scylla (*met.* XIV. 73-74 *Ni prius in scopulum, qui nunc quoque saxeus extat, / transformatata foret*).

²² Dans une autre pétrification, à propos de Niobé (*met.* VI. 312) : *lacrimis etiam nunc marmora manant.*

²³ À propos du cœur de Battus (*met.* II. 705-706) *uertit in durum silicem* ; de Méduse (*met.* IV. 780-781) : *simulacra ... / In silicem ex ipsis uisa conuersa Medusa* ; de Lichas (*met.* IX. 225) *in rigidos uersum silices* ; des Propétides (*met.* X. 242) *In rigidum ... silicem ... uersae.*

²⁴ Dans d'autres pétrifications (en plus de *met.* XII. 23) : *met.* II. 830 (à propos d'Aglauros) *saxum iam colla tenebat* ; VI. 309 (à propos de Niobé) *intra quoque uiscera saxum est* ; XIII. 540-541 (à propos d'Hécube) *duroque simillima saxo / Torpet* ; XIV. 565 (à propos du navire d'Alcinoos) *saxumque increscere ligno* ; XIV. 758 (à propos du cœur d'Anaxarète) *Quod fuit in duro iam pridem pectore saxum.*

²⁵ Cf. aussi, à propos d'Aglauros (*met.* II. 831-832) : *signumque exsangue sedebat / Nec lapis albus erat* ou de l'urine du lynx (*met.* XV. 415) *uertitur in lapides.*

²⁶ Ovide l'emploie à propos du cancer (*met.* II. 825-826) : *Vt ... solet ... cancer / Serpere.*

torpor grauis occupat artus. Et surtout, *uertere*, notamment au passif (v. 98 *uertimur*), est un des verbes préférés par Ovide pour exprimer la métamorphose. Les exemples sont innombrables. En dehors de ceux, déjà cités, qui concernent comme ici la pétrification, on relèvera plusieurs exemples associés à l'expression *in faciem* + génitif,²⁷ qui apparaît ici au v. 95, et en particulier un exemple qui concerne la gigantomachie, même s'il s'agit d'un épisode qui n'apparaît pas dans le poème inachevé (ou incomplet) de Claudien, à propos du sang des Géants transformé par la Terre (*met.* I. 160) *in faciem uertisse hominum* ; la même association se retrouve à propos de Périclymène (*met.* XII. 560) : *Vertitur in faciem uolucris*. À propos des poupes des vaisseaux troyens (*met.* XIV. 550),²⁸ Ovide use du verbe *mutare* : *in capitum facies puppes mutantur aduncae*.

Enfin, la structure de la phrase qui conclut la métamorphose (v. 101 *Quod timuit, iam totus erat*) éveille immanquablement des relents ovidiens, même si cette formulation ne se lit pas chez Ovide : pour le sens, on pense aux vaisseaux troyens métamorphosés en Naiades (*met.* XIV. 555-557) : *Quasque ante timebant, / Illas uirgineis exercent lusibus undas / Naidas aequoreae*. Pour la brièveté de la formule, on peut rapprocher avec une inversion le v. 739 du premier livre des *Métamorphoses* : *Fitque quod ante fuit*.

Au total, ce travail archéologique sur la langue poétique de Claudien comparée à celle des *Métamorphoses* ne met en évidence aucun emprunt indiscutable, aucune allusion qui s'impose nécessairement et pourtant, il flotte sur ces vers un parfum ovidien parce que, si chaque mot ou chaque expression isolément ne dépend pas précisément d'un passage des *Métamorphoses*, ils sont assemblés dans un esprit ovidien pour offrir au lecteur un 'à la manière des métamorphoses d'Ovide', non dans un plagiat ou dans un centon, mais dans une écriture originale.

En effet, dans la métamorphose de Pallas, on retrouve ce qui fait l'esprit de la métamorphose ovidienne.²⁹ Comme Ovide,

²⁷ Avec un adjectif à la place du génitif, *met.* IV 125-126 (à propos des fruits de l'arbre de Pyrame et Thisbé) : *in atram / Vertuntur faciem*.

²⁸ L'expression *in faciem* + génitif s'emploie aussi chez Ovide avec le verbe *abire* (*met.* XI. 653 à propos de Morphée qui prend les traits de Céyx).

²⁹ Sur ce point, voir en particulier Viarre 1964 ; Tronchet 1998, en particulier 'Un classement thématique des métamorphoses'.

Claudien présente cette métamorphose non pas immédiatement dans son résultat, mais dans son accomplissement, dans son devenir,³⁰ avec, comme nous l'avons vu, des articulations temporelles de type ovidien (*ut sensit, iam, uix, iam*). Nul besoin d'insister sur ce point. Mais surtout, le sujet de la métamorphose, le Géant Pallas, est pleinement conscient de sa métamorphose (importance du verbe *sentire* chez Claudien comme chez Ovide):³¹ il vit de l'intérieur la métamorphose qu'il est en train de subir, comme Scylla voit (*aspicit*) la mutation de son corps en train de se produire (*met.* XIV. 59-67), comme Macarée qui se rend compte (*sensi*) de sa transformation en cochon (*met.* XIV. 282-284), puis sa mutation inverse pour redevenir un homme (XIV. 302-307), comme Picus qui voit avec étonnement (*miratur ... uidit*) sa métamorphose en train de se faire (*met.* XIV. 388-396), ou encore Lycus, Abas et leurs compagnons, témoins étonnés (*miratur ... mirantur*) de la métamorphose qu'ils vivent (*met.* XIV. 504-507). C'est cette conscience de la métamorphose qui pousse Pallas à prendre la parole, peut-être non pas comme Philémon et Baucis qui se contentent des paroles d'adieu de leur amour conjugal (*met.* VIII. 717-718), mais plutôt comme Ocyrhoé, à qui les destins veulent interdire de parler, mais qui trouve encore des mots pour décrire la métamorphose en cavale, scandée par des *iam*, qu'elle est en train de vivre (*met.* II. 657-664). De même ici (vv. 98-100), Pallas, que son nom prédestinait à être tué par Pallas-Athéna, s'interroge à haute voix sur la pétrification qui s'insinue dans son corps et qu'il décrit en en vivant la progression. Enfin, au dénouement (vv. 101-103), Pallas est en quelque sorte puni par où il a péché : lui qui a eu l'audace de vouloir agresser les dieux ouraniens en leur lançant des blocs de pierre se voit transformé en l'arme de son forfait... et utilisé comme tel par l'un de ses frères ! Il devient ce qu'il a eu l'audace de vouloir être : une arme contre les dieux. Cette sorte de loi du talion a bien été mise en valeur

³⁰ Ce point important est bien souligné par Viarre 1964, en particulier 'Le mouvement de la métamorphose' (pp. 113-117) et toute la quatrième partie ('La métamorphose comme transfiguration du mouvement de l'existence', pp. 291-427).

³¹ Cf. S. Viarre 1964, 'La prise de conscience de la métamorphose', pp. 291-296, et en particulier pp. 295-296 pour la prise de conscience de la victime : Glaucus, Io, Actéon, Cipus, Lycaon, Daphné, Coronis, Aglaucos, Aréthuse, les paysans lyciens, Dryope, Hercule, Céphale ou Macarée.

par les exégètes des *Métamorphoses* d'Ovide.³² Ainsi le féroce et sanguinaire Lycaeon (*met.* I. 163-243 ; *feritate Lycaeon*, v. 198) est changé en loup, animal qui conserve sa nature profonde (vv. 237-239), Ascalaphe pour avoir dénoncé Proserpine devient le messager de tous les malheurs (*met.* v. 549-550), les Piérides métamorphosées en pies sont réduites à n'être plus que musique (*met.* v. 677-678), ou, pour prendre un exemple tout proche du cas de Pallas, l'inflexible Anaxarète au cœur de pierre devient réellement pierre (*met.* XIV. 754-758).

On aura compris le caractère un peu paradoxal de mon titre. Le passage étudié me paraît fournir un exemple palmarès d'*aemulatio* quasiment sans emprunt de détail et sans *retractatio* formelle évidente. Claudien manifestement rivalise ici avec l'Ovide des *Métamorphoses*, et sur le thème central du poème héroïque d'Ovide : la métamorphose à l'œuvre dans l'univers. Mais il a choisi un épisode que son devancier avait à peine abordé, sans lui donner toute l'importance qu'il avait à ses yeux d'homme du IV^e siècle ap. J.-C., la gigantomachie et, dans ce thème, il a privilégié un 'détail', le combat de Pallas contre Minerve-Pallas, pour en faire un petit médaillon ovidien sans emprunt remarquable à Ovide, mais tout pénétré de l'esprit des *Métamorphoses* de manière à restituer à chaque mot sa saveur ovidienne dans un 'à la manière de' qui se veut hommage original.

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Résumé

Le récit par Claudien de la *Gigantomachie* (*carm. min.* 53) ne présente aucun point commun précis avec le passage des *Métamorphoses* d'Ovide qui traite le même thème (*met.* I. 151-162). Mais la pétrifica-

tion de plusieurs Géants (*carm. min.* 53. 91-113) décrit des métamorphoses avec un vocabulaire ovidien, sans emprunt indiscutable, mais dans une écriture à la manière d'Ovide et en *aemulatio* avec lui.

Abstract

Claudian's narration of *Gigantomachia* (*carm. min.* 53) does not present any precise common point with the passage of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* about the same topic (*met.* I. 151-162). But the petrification of some Giants (*carm. min.* 53. 91-113) describes metamorphoses with an Ovidian vocabulary, without any indisputable borrowing, but in a way of writing after the manner of Ovid and in *aemulatio* with him.

OVIDIAN TRACES IN JEROME'S WORKS. RE-EVALUATION AND BEYOND

1. *Introduction and Premise*

Jerome was a 'philologist' in every sense of the word. Both an exceptional scholar and a 'lover of literature,' he read some works for content alone, but others he read for aesthetic pleasure, such as Latin poetry. Among the most famous Latin poets, Ovid is the least present in Jerome's oeuvre. In this paper, Jerome's use of Ovid will be explored: what he knew, how he knew it, how he used it, and how he may have felt about the most light-hearted Augustan poet.

There are many technical terms employed by scholars who deal with intertextuality. The paper at hand will focus on those which have value as heuristic concepts. If a passage of Jerome's shows common features with an Ovidian source, certain tests must be applied to find out if it is a genuine 'usage'. This word will denote an intentional use of Ovid's poetry.

The most obvious and least problematic usage is the 'citation', i.e. if the author flags the usage as a foreign piece of text by naming the source, *e.g. ut dicit Tullius*, followed or preceded by the original or slightly altered wording. There is not a single explicit citation of Ovid in Jerome's works. Ovid does not seem to have been an authority for Jerome, unlike Virgil or Horace.¹ Yet there are two usages that appear at first glance to be Ovidian citations,

¹ Hagendahl 1958, pp. 101-102: 'Of all poets Virgil came nearest to Jerome's heart. This is shown by numerous other quotations, ... The quotations from Virgil are twice as numerous as those from all other poets together'. Jerome's appreciation of Horace is not concealed; he is occasionally cited by name, as in

but the name of the author is missing. Lübeck (1872) was the first to suggest that *Risit et argutis quiddam promisit ocellis* in *epist.* 123. 4 was a direct citation of *amores* III. 2. 83.² But instead of telling the reader the source of the verse, Jerome calls it a *versiculus ille vulgatus*, dissimulating that he knows the source. Such a case will be called ‘quotation’. A second example was also identified by Lübeck.³ Jerome writes (*in Os.* I. 2. 396-400):

Huius uxor Semiramis, de qua multa et miranda referuntur, muros Babylonis exstruxit. De qua insignis poeta testatur dicens: quam dicitur olim coctilibus muris cinxisse Semiramis urbem.

The following passage of Ovid was used (*met.* IV. 55-58):

Pyramus et Thisbe, iuvenum pulcherrimus alter,
altera, quas Oriens habuit, praelata puellis,
contiguas tenuere domos, ubi dicitur altam
coctilibus muris cinxisse Semiramis urbem.

Ovid’s *ubi dicitur altam* was altered to *quam dicitur olim*, but otherwise Jerome quotes the exact passage and even leaves the original meter intact. Curiously, he avoids naming the source by referring to Ovid as an *insignis poeta*. These two examples suggest that Jerome may not have been comfortable revealing his knowledge of Ovid. After being beaten *ad tribunal iudicis* for reading even the respectable Cicero, what punishments were in store for him if found guilty of being an *Ovidianus*? Yet, the most severe nightmares could have been visited upon him by his enemies, such as Rufinus, who would later accuse him of having broken his promise never to read pagan literature again.⁴ Consequently, one must assume that Jerome was somewhat careful in his use

epist. 27. 3 *Verum ne Flaccus de nobis rideat – amphora coepit institui: currente rota cur urceus exit?*

² Lübeck 1871, p. 191.

³ Lübeck 1871, p. 192.

⁴ Ruf. *apol. adv. Hier.* II. 11. 14: *cum ad haec omnia quae supra diximus, etiam illud addatur, ubi cesset omne commentum, quod in monasterio positus in Bethleem, ante non multum adhuc temporis partes grammaticas executus sit, et Maronem suum comicosque ac lyricos et historicos auctores traditis sibi ad discendum dei timorem puerulis exponebat, scilicet ut et praeceptor fieret auctorum gentilium, quos si legisset tantummodo, Christum se iurauerat negaturum, cf. Hier. epist. 22. 30: ego, qui tanto*

of Ovid – though he could not refrain entirely from incorporating Ovidian material into his prose. Unfortunately, this mindset makes the modern scholar's work even more difficult.

The third type of usage is the 'paraphrase'.⁵ The author summarizes or retells a passage with or without naming his source. Words and meter may be altered. One example of Ovidian paraphrase in Jerome's corpus can be found in his commentary on Isaiah:

tunc de montibus et collibus, iuxta fabulas poetarum, et Saturni aureum saeculum lactis riuos fluere, et de arborum foliis stillare mella purissima. (*in Es.* IX. 30. 26)

Lübeck connects this passage to the description of the Golden Age in the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (I. 107-112):

Ver erat aeternum, placidique tepentibus auris
mulcebant Zephyri natos sine semine flores;
mox etiam fruges tellus inarata ferebat,
nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristas:
flumina iam lactis, iam flumina nectaris ibant,
flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella.

Jerome's *lactis riuos fluere* has an Ovidian counterpart in *flumina iam lactis*. Both texts use a form of the verb *stillare* with *mella* as the subject. The descriptions pertain to the same topic: paradise. In Late Antiquity the *Metamorphoses* had become the main source for Greek mythology in the Latin-speaking world,⁶ so it is no surprise that Jerome used Ovid here.

The fourth and last type is the 'allusion'. Allusion occurs when an author intentionally uses another author's passage but alters it. This may be done with 'recognizable coloration or flavor, but not necessarily invoking a precise passage',⁷ or even with intentional obscurity. This is the most common way Jerome

constrictus articulo uellem etiam maiora promittere, deiurare coepi et nomen eius obtestans dicere: domine, si umquam habuero codices saeculares, si legero, te negaui.

⁵ See Courtney 1993, pp. 13-16 for another good example of a paraphrase, i.e. Gellius' re-narration of the fable about the bird *cassita* (Gell. II. 29), a prose version based on a passage by Ennius.

⁶ Cameron 2004, pp. 310-311.

⁷ See Shanzer 2010, p. 60; for further helpful classification see Shanzer 2012, pp. 168-171.

chose to reference Ovidian poetry. It is also the most difficult to detect, especially since it seems that Jerome avoided making very obvious allusions to Ovid in his work. A good example of an Ovidian allusion was noted by Bauer in Hier. *epist.* 22. 28:⁸

omnis his cura de uestibus, si bene oleant, si pes laxa pelle non folleat.

Ovid has (*ars* I. 516):

Nec vagus in laxa pes tibi pelle natet

Since Bauer's methodology is somewhat opaque in his article, this example will serve to introduce some *criteria* for identifying allusions. Practical help comes from Murgia, who has established a *criterion* of three significant shared elements which guarantee a relationship⁹ (e.g., identical vocabulary, similar *Wortarten*). The words *pes* and *laxa pelle* are identical; where Ovid uses *natet*, Jerome has *folleat*, which is a synonym and contributes satirical flair with its connotations of ballooning and emptiness. Yet, lexical similarities alone are not enough. Murgia's rule must be taken into account, but individual cases may have fewer elements in common while nevertheless functioning as an allusion. Hinds has proposed that there 'is no discursive element in a Roman poem, no matter how unremarkable in itself, [...] that cannot in some imaginable circumstance mobilize a specific allusion'.¹⁰ However, lexical similarities in passages that do not share content-related features must be considered carefully.

In the example above, the same situation is described in both passages, namely, a shoe that is too big for one's foot. In addition to this, one must compare the contexts. In Ovid, the *praeceptor amoris* advises the male reader about appearance. He should, among other things, care about how his toga looks (*ars* I. 514) and avoid bad breath (*ars* I. 521) – similar things Jerome mentions (*cura de vestibus, si bene oleant*). Jerome's passage is likewise aimed explicitly at men: *sed ne tantum videar disputare de feminis* (*epist.* 22. 28).

⁸ Bauer 1975, pp. 14-15.

⁹ Murgia 1985, p. 458.

¹⁰ Hinds 1998, p. 26.

An example of an hasty assumption might be the following phrase in Jerome's *epist.* 84. 3:

iam canis spargebatur caput

Could Jerome be alluding to the phrase *sparsus tempora canis* from Ov. *met.* XIII. 568 and xv. 211?¹¹ An older person with salt-and-pepper hair is not distinctively Ovidian if the context does not offer additional points of contact.¹² Jerome here is proudly describing his teacher Didymus, pointing at his dignity and wisdom, evoking biblical truisms about the elderly.¹³

Each case of Ovidian usage in Jerome's corpus needs individual treatment and discussion, including analysis of vocabulary, context, and (possible) intentions.

2. Rethinking Extant Research

Only two scholars have undertaken detailed work on Ovidian traces in the works of Jerome: Lübeck (1872) and Hagendahl (1958). In more recent years, other scholars have added pieces to the puzzle, such as Bauer (1975), Consolino (1988), Tkacz (1996), Cain (2013), and Weidmann (2014). Their findings will be summarized, discussed, and at times re-evaluated.

2.1 Lübeck

Lübeck's work is primarily a list of passages in Jerome's corpus in which the author could identify borrowings from classical Latin writers. At times, he adds a few words of interpretation.

The three usages Lübeck identified (two quotations and one paraphrase) have already been adduced above.¹⁴ His discussion of the first quotation, *Risit et argutis quiddam promisit ocellis* (*am.* III. 2. 83) in *epist.* 123. 4 demands further comment. When

¹¹ As does Hilberg in his edition.

¹² Plin. *nat.* XXXVI. 55; Sen. *suas.* 6. 26; Val. Fl. I. 709; Paul. Nol. *epist.* 40. 6.

¹³ Sap. 4. 8 *cani sunt autem sensus hominibus*; in *epist.* 79. 6 Jerome quotes this as *cani enim sunt hominis sapientia*; also Prov. 20. 29 *exultatio iuvenum fortitudo eorum et dignitas senum canities*.

¹⁴ Ov. *am.* III. 2. 83, *met.* IV. 55-58, *met.* I. 107-112.

Jerome speaks of *versiculus ille vulgatus*, Lübeck takes the words at face value¹⁵ and believes them to be a *geflügeltes Wort* that was used by speakers ignorant of its origin. Hagendahl would concur later that it cannot be certain that Jerome knew the *Amores*.¹⁶ However, Jerome had good reason to conceal his familiarity with Ovidian poetry, especially the sexually free-wheeling *Amores* and this particular verse. After the poetic persona's adventure in the circus, his desired mistress promises him something with her 'bedroom eyes'; he is sure now that at some other location an erotic postlude will take place.

Furthermore, Lübeck points out that Jerome used the *Metamorphoses* in his commentary on Jonah and cites the following passage without drawing any real conclusions from it:

Sin autem infideles erunt, legant quindecim libros Nasonis Metamorphoseon, et omnem Graecam, Latinamque historiam, ibique cernent uel Daphnen in laurum, uel Phaetontis sorores populos arbores conuersas fuisse; quomodo Iupiter eorum sublimissimus deus, sit mutatus in cygnum, in auro fluxerit, in tauro rapuerit, et cetera, in quibus ipsa turpitudine fabularum diuinitatis denegat sanctitatem. (*in Ion.* 2. 57-63)

This is a *testimonium* to Ovid's works. It proves only that Jerome knew that Ovid wrote the *Metamorphoses* and that he had some knowledge of the content. It does not by itself prove that Jerome read Ovid's verses about the mentioned myths. As mentioned above, the *Metamorphoses* was the main Latin source for Greek myth in Jerome's day, but many would not have read fifteen books of poetry merely for mythographical information. For this purpose there were shorter works that compiled the transmitted knowledge of Greek myth, such as Hyginus' *Metamorphoses* and the *Narrationes*.¹⁷ Jerome could have also used one of these. However as it shall soon be clear, he knew at least parts of the *Metamorphoses*.

¹⁵ Lübeck 1871, p. 191.

¹⁶ Hagendahl 1958, p. 283: 'we cannot infer that Jerome knew Ovid's amatory poetry, for the line is characterized as *versiculus ille vulgatus*.'

¹⁷ Cameron 2004, pp. 310-311.

2.2 Hagendahl

Hagendahl's contribution begins with Ovidian verses that had already been noted by Lübeck:¹⁸ he saw Ov. *met.* I. 107-112 in another sentence of Jerome's commentary on Isaiah.¹⁹ Here, the similarities are striking, too, but a shift of content should be noted: in Jerome's description rivers will run full of honey wine (*mulso vino plena current flumina*), whereas in Ovid's description they run with milk; but there are now springs in Jerome's passage that provide milk instead of water (*lacteis fontibus omnia complebuntur*). The trees that provide honey are the same as above.²⁰ Jerome adapted the Ovidian passage and combined it with the biblical promised land: *Et intres in terram fluentem lacte et melle* (Ex. 33. 3). This passage too is a paraphrase.

Furthermore, Hagendahl sees traces of Ovid's description of Chaos in Jerome's commentary on Ecclesiastes, specifically in a passage where he describes the nature of the world.²¹ Jerome believes that according to contemporary 'science' all being consists (*subsistat*) of opposites. Jerome and Ovid name the same opposites in their descriptions: *calidis et frigidis* vs. *frigida pugnat calidis*, *siccis et humentibus* vs. *umentia siccis*, and *duris et mollibus* vs. *mollia cum duris*. In addition to the matching vocabulary, the order in which these concepts appear is identical, suggesting that Jerome paraphrased Ovid's description. Jerome could be referencing a standard order of features for this discussion, but there is no evidence that such a set order existed. This Ovidian passage was later used by late antique poets to describe biblical

¹⁸ See Hagendahl 1958, pp. 231-232.

¹⁹ Ov. *met.* I. 107-112 *Ver erat aeternum, placidique tepentibus auris / mulcebant Zephyri natos sine semine flores; / mox etiam fruges tellus inarata ferebat, / nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristis: / flumina iam lactis, iam flumina nectaris ibant, / flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella; Hier. in Es. 4. 11. 6. 28-32: Nisi forte iuxta fabulas poetarum, aureum nobis Saturni saeculum restituent, in quo lupi et agni pascentur simul, et mulso uino plena current flumina, et de foliis arborum stillabunt mella dulcissima, lactisque fontibus omnia complebuntur.*

²⁰ See above, p. 181.

²¹ Ov. *met.* I. 18-20 *Obstatatque aliis aliud, quia corpore in uno / frigida pugnant calidis, umentia siccis, / mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus; Hier. in eccles. 7. 15. 2 Nec putes uel bonorum tantum uel malorum in mundo esse naturam, cum ex contrariis mundus ipse subsistat, calidis et frigidis, siccis et humentibus, duris et mollibus, tenebrosis et lucidis, malis et bonis.*

creation, among them Orientius, Claudius Marius Victorius, and Prosper of Aquitaine.²²

2.3 Bauer

Bauer's first find has been already discussed in the introduction to this article.²³ Another of his suggestions must be re-evaluated:

Audenter loquor: cum omnia deus possit, suscitare virginem non potest post ruinam. (Hier. *epist.* 22. 5)

Bauer believes Jerome thought of these verses (*her.* 5. 103):

Tu quoque clamabis: nulla reparabilis arte
laesa pudicitia est; deperit illa semel.

On a lexical level there is no similarity. The only common element is the content, but the idea that virginity cannot be restored is not unique enough to be limited to one author. Bauer may be defending Jerome against Grützmacher, who wrote that Jerome, as a religious person, should not have written such a thing.²⁴ Bauer wants to explain the reason for a blasphemous *dictum* by tracing it back to its origin.²⁵

Furthermore, Bauer discusses the conclusion to *epist.* 50:

Et ut certius sententiam meam teneat, uolo omnes, qui propter nocturnos forsitan metus soli cubitare non possunt, uxores ducere. (*epist.* 50. 5)

Bauer believes that the following three passages, or at least one of them, were on Jerome's mind:²⁶

Dum Menelaus abest, Helene, ne sola iaceret,
hospitis est tepido nocte recepta sinu. (Ov. *ars* II. 359-360)
Quid faciat? vir abest, et adest non rusticus hospes
et timet in vacuo sola cubare toro. (Ov. *ars* II. 369-370)

²² Roberts 2002, pp. 411-414.

²³ Hier. *epist.* 22. 28 *omnis his cura de uestibus, si bene oleant, si pes laxa pelle non folleat*, Ov. *ars* I. 516 *Nec vagus in laxa pes tibi pelle natet*, see Bauer 1975, pp. 14-15.

²⁴ Grützmacher 1901, p. 135.

²⁵ Bauer 1975, p. 16.

²⁶ See Bauer 1975, pp. 17-18.

Sola iaces viduo tam longa nocte cubili:
in viduo iaceo solus et ipse toro. (Ov. *her.* 16. 317-318)

According to my preliminary criteria there are few similarities. Jerome is talking about men who should marry if they cannot lie in bed alone (*solus cubitare*) because they are tortured by nocturnal fears (*propter nocturnos metus*). Each of the Ovidian cases describes a person who is lonely and longing for someone, another matter entirely. On the lexical level, the word *solus/-a* is the only true common feature, and perhaps the various lexemes for lying, *cubitare* vs. *iacere* (twice) and *cubare*. But there is no sign of the *metus nocturnus*, only the word *timet* + infinitive, which is the fear of but not the fear while lying alone; in short, nothing is specific enough to connect Ovid's verses to Jerome's prose. This suggestion by Bauer must be disregarded.

In his conclusion Bauer makes the ridiculous suggestion that Jerome knew Ovid through oral transmission. He cites Seneca (*contr.* III. 7; X. 4) as proof that Ovid was on everyone's lips.²⁷ This apologetic strategy seems motivated by an impulse similar to that of Lübeck, who took Jerome's *versiculus ille vulgatus* at face value. Both scholars dislike the idea of Jerome sneaking around his monastery at night after all the other monks had gone to bed and secretly reading Ovid in his library, drooling at imagined forbidden pleasures. The argument gets even more improbable and bizarre when Bauer envisions Jerome picking up Ovidian verses in the theater or at banquets:²⁸ it is more likely that Jerome read Ovid in private than that he, an ascetic with a public persona and enemies ready to tear him to pieces, attended such events.

2.4 Weidmann

In Birnbaum's recent commentary on Jerome's commentary on Ecclesiastes, the author attributes a new find to Clemens Weidmann.²⁹

²⁷ Bauer 1975, p. 18.

²⁸ Bauer 1975, pp. 18-19.

²⁹ Birnbaum 2014, p. 187; the text provided by Birnbaum is a revised version of the old text from the CCSL and the best choice available today.

Et haec, inquit, aliquis loquatur Epicurus et Aristippus et Cyrenaici et ceterae pecudes philosophorum; ego autem mecum diligenter retractans invenio non, ut quidam male aestimant, omnia fortuito geri et variam in rebus humanis fortunam ludere, sed cuncta iudicio dei fieri.³⁰

Ovid *Pont.* IV. 3. 49-50 has:

Ludit in humanis diuina potentia rebus
et certam praesens uix feret hora fidem.

Within Jerome's accusative-infinitive construction (*variā fortunā ... ludere*), changeable fortune plays its game with human matters (*in rebus humanis*); in Ovid's verse it is divine power that plays its game (*ludit*) with human matters (*in humanis rebus*). In addition to the lexical similarities the thought behind the sentence is very similar: a higher power, beyond human control, interferes with human affairs.

Weidmann has indeed identified an allusion.

2.5 Tkacz

Tkacz intriguingly argues that Jerome used a passage from the *Metamorphoses* in his translation of the Latin Bible, the Vulgate, twice. Since the Vulgate is a translation, it cannot be counted among Jerome's original literary works. Nevertheless, if Jerome really used Ovid's words for translating scripture, this is of great interest for the current study. The passages discussed by Tkacz appear in the gospel of Mark and the Old Testament book of Esther:

cumque introisset filia ipsius Herodiadis et saltasset et placuisset Herodi simulque recumbentibus rex ait puellae 'pete a me quod vis et dabo tibi.' et iuravit illi: quia quicquid petieris, dabo tibi, licet dimidium regni mei. (Marc. 6. 22-23)

dixitque ad eam rex: 'quid vis Hester regina? quae est petitio tua? etiam si dimidiam regni partem petieris dabitur tibi' (Esth. 5. 3)

³⁰ Hier. *in eccles.* 9. 7/12. 1.

The direct speech is repeated twice in the same story.³¹ Tkacz believes that Jerome was influenced by these lines of Ovid (*met.* II. 42-45):

amplexumque dato 'nec tu meus esse negari
dignus es, et Clymene veros' ait 'edidit ortus,
quoque minus dubites, quodvis pete munus, ut illud
me tribuente feras.'

The phrase that raised Tkacz suspicion was *quodvis pete*.³² It is used in Mark ('*pete a me quod vis*'), and with slight variation in Esther ('*quid vis ... quae est petitio tua?*'). Tkacz argues well that Jerome could have chosen other verbs, such as *rogare* or *poscere*. Also, all three situations describe rashly made promises. Furthermore, both Salome and Phaeton cause someone to die as a consequence of their choice; Esther risks her life to save her people. So far, the argument is sound.

Tkacz was aware that the text of the Old Latin Bible could either corroborate or disprove her theory, but the books in question had not yet been published by the *Vetus Latina* institute in Beuron at the time when she wrote her article. Now it is possible to check these editions. The Old Latin versions of Mark show that Jerome simply adapted the available texts. Text D, the oldest available European transmission for the passage,³³ reads: *dixit rex puellae pete me quod vis*.³⁴ Other texts have *posce* and *postula*. In the case of Esther, there are Old Latin versions of two of the three passages of concern. Esth. 5. 3 reads: *Ne timeas sed quaerere quae est postulatio tua et quod est desiderium tuum*,³⁵ and Esth. 7. 2 includes: *Quod est desiderium tuum* and *Quae est petitio tua*.³⁶ Though the Old Latin Bible's versions of Esther

³¹ Esth. 5. 6 *dixitque ei rex postquam vinum biberat abundanter: quid petis ut detur tibi, et pro qua re postulas, etiam si dimidiam partem regni mei petieris inpetrabis?*; Esth. 7. 2 *dixitque ei rex etiam in secundo die postquam vino incaluerat: quae est petitio tua Hester ut detur tibi, et quid vis fieri etiam si dimidiam regni mei partem petieris inpetrabis.*

³² Tkacz 1996, pp. 380-381.

³³ See Marc. VL, 1, p. 47.

³⁴ Marc. VL, 5 p. 327.

³⁵ Hest. VL, p. 306.

³⁶ Hest. VL, p. 339.

partially corroborate Tkacz's assumption, the fact that one version of Esther, and especially the text of Mark, is almost identical to Jerome's version, makes an Ovidian influence unlikely. Additionally, Jerome's revision of Mark was complete in the early 380s, whereas Esther was translated much later, after 404:³⁷ Since Jerome occasionally made stylistic changes to the biblical text,³⁸ he may have standardized the language to some extent in his versions. Tkacz's suggestion of Ovidian influence must thus be considered intriguing but unlikely.³⁹

2.6 Consolino

In her acute study of 1988, Consolino addresses the poetical influences in the poem Jerome wrote for the tomb of Paula, his most devoted patron, student, and friend. Clearly, Jerome was inspired by classical poetry. Her work includes some useful observations that should be taken into account.

Jerome's verses are as follows (*epist.* 108. 33. 2, vv. 1-3):

Scipio quam genuit, Pauli fudere parentes,
Gracchorum suboles, Agamemnonis inclita proles,
Hoc iacet in tumulo, Paulam dixere priores.

The ending of the second verse, *inclita proles*, is an Ovidian verse ending, such as: *appellantque Lichan. at tu, Iovis inclita proles* (Ov. *met.* ix. 229).⁴⁰ The same ending can also be found in Valerius Flaccus.⁴¹ Given the lexical congruence, a slight contextual similarity, the scarceness of evidence from other authors, and the syntactical closeness of the genitive of origin (*Iovis* vs. *Agamemnonis*), one may suspect an Ovidian trace here, but not beyond a doubt. If it is, it would be an allusion.

The ending of the third verse, *dixere priores*, may also betray Ovidian influence:

³⁷ See Fürst 2003, p. 1.

³⁸ Elliot 1992, p. 223.

³⁹ Adkin 2000, pp. 77-78 has already argued against Tkacz but without much elaboration.

⁴⁰ See Consolino 1988, p. 231; cf. Schumann 1979, pp. 49-50.

⁴¹ Val. Fl. iv. 549 *stupet Aesonis inclita proles*; see Consolino 1988, p. 231.

Est locus in Scythia – Tauros dixere priores – (Ov. *Pont.* III. 2. 45)
 inde sata est nympha (Cranaen dixere priores) (Ov. *fast.* VI. 107)
 est locus Arcadiae, Pheneon dixere priores (Ov. *met.* xv. 332)

But, the same *clausula* can be also found in the Aeneid (Verg. *Aen.* III. 693). Cain, who mentions the same three Ovidian verses later in his commentary on Jerome, *epist.* 108, adds one verse by Paulinus of Nola (*carm.* 6. 22)⁴² as a *comparandum*. But even if one ignores the evidence for this specific wording, the two words do not seem to hint at any particular passage Jerome might have wished to evoke. For this reason, the verse ending *dixere priores* is probably a reminiscence from classical poetry in general, but not meant to allude specifically to Ovid.

As the poem goes on, Consolino discusses the position of *genetrix* in the verse. As in *Eustochiae genetrix, Romani prima senatus* (108. 33. 2. v. 4), the word *genetrix* tends to occupy this position in a hexameter,⁴³ as in *caerula quem genetrix aegre solata dolentem* (*fast.* I. 365) and *et pater et genetrix, amborum nomen habenti* (*met.* IV. 384); but also in the works of other Latin poets.⁴⁴ Again, one must conclude that it is not an exclusively Ovidian influence but rather a proof of Jerome's knowledge of Latin poetry.

2.7 Cain

The index of ancient sources in Cain's commentary on the *Epitaphium Sanctae Paulae* (*epist.* 108) cites numerous references to Ovid,⁴⁵ curiously even more than to Virgil.⁴⁶ But a closer look reveals that most of these references are not intended to be *fontes* but *similia*. There are numerous reasons why Ovidian verses are cited in Cain's commentary. He provides little interpretation, leaving the reader to decide what to do with the presented material. His citations will be organized and evaluated here,

⁴² Cain 2013, p. 476.

⁴³ Consolino 1988, p. 231; Cain later mentions the same observation in very similar words, but he does not cite Consolino, cf. Cain 2013, p. 476.

⁴⁴ Lucr. I. 1; Verg. *Aen.* IV. 227, IX. 284; Stat. *Ach.* II. 17; *silv.* I. 2. 84; *Theb.* IV. 565; see Consolino 1988, p. 231 and Cain 2013, p. 476.

⁴⁵ Cain 2013, p. 564.

⁴⁶ Cain 2013, pp. 568-569.

since his work on *epist.* 108 is a good laboratory for studying the problem of detecting Ovid in Jerome.

Some of Cain's references are of marginal interest for the task at hand and can be quickly set aside, e.g., when Jerome mentions the *raptus Sabinarum* in 108. 13. 2, Cain comments that this mythic event has been told again and again in Roman literature, giving Ov. *fast.* III. 167-258 as an example.⁴⁷ After filtering out these kinds of citations, the remaining verses will be evaluated and interpreted.

In the opening line of Jerome's *epitaphium* (*epist.* 108. 1. 1) Cain identifies poetical words:⁴⁸

Si cuncta mei corporis membra verterentur in linguas et
omnes artus humana voce resonarent

Cain mentions that the words *membra* and *artus* are almost exclusively paired in poetry, as in Ov. *am.* I. 7. 53, *Pont.* I. 1. 27-28, and *met.* VI. 352-354.⁴⁹ There are too many examples in the two other poets for this to be an Ovidian usage. Cain himself adduces them and the references: there is Virgil, whom Jerome knew very well (Verg. *Aen.* VI. 732; IX. 490), but also Lucretius (Lucr. II. 82; III. 151, 291, 620-621, 703; IV. 119, 844, 888, 1042; VI. 797, 945). The abundance of evidence in the latter poet is an intriguing find, but although Jerome clearly used poetic vocabulary, he was not influenced by Ovid alone.

⁴⁷ Cain 2013, p. 283; similar use: Cain 2013, p. 214: Ov. *trist.* I. 10 (as an example for other travel descriptions); Cain 2013, p. 343: Ov. *rem.* 369 (one of more examples for the 'topos about the perils of greatness'); Cain 2013, pp. 154-155: Ov. *fast.* IV. 39-40 (as Jerome quotes Virg. *Aen.* I. 288 about the origin of the name Julius, Cain comments and adds Ovid's verses on the same topic); Cain 2013, pp. 99-100: Ov. *ars.* I. 435-436, *fast.* II. 120, *met.* VIII. 533-534; Cain 2013, p. 185: Ov. *met.* V. 214-215 (Ovid as a possible source for the common phrase *supplices manus tendere* in *epist.* 108. 6. 3).

⁴⁸ Cain 2013, p. 102, Jerome (allegedly) uses the Homeric 'many mouths cliché', which is imitated by the Latin poets as well as by Ovid; Angela Zielinski Kinney has proposed a Judeo-Christian source instead of a Virgilian source. Her argument seems to be a more plausible interpretation but has not yet been published.

⁴⁹ *Exanimis artus et membra trementia vidi* (*am.* I. 7. 53); *paruis in exiles sucus mihi peruenit artus / membraque sunt cera pallidiora noua* (*Pont.* I. 1. 27-28); *non ego nostros / abluere hic artus lassataque membra parabam, / sed relevare sitim* (*met.* VI. 352-354).

In the beginning of the *epitaphium* Jerome claims that he will not add any praise of Paula, since the whole world sings her praises: *quam totus orbis canit* (*epist.* 108. 2. 1). Cain points out that this was 'a well-known poetic conceit that is especially prominent in Ovid'.⁵⁰ Four examples are given:

nos quoque per totum pariter cantabimur orbem,
iunctaque semper erunt nomina nostra tuis. (*am.* I. 3. 25-26)

Mortale est, quod quaeris, opus. mihi fama perennis
quaeritur, in toto semper ut orbe canar. (*am.* I. 15. 7-8)

Me vatem celebrate, viri, mihi dicite laudes,
Cantetur toto nomen in orbe meum. (*ars.* II. 741-742)

iam canitur toto nomen in orbe meum (*her.* 15. 28)

In Martial a similar motif can be found (*Mart.* VII. 17. 9-10, VIII. 61. 3).

The idea of singing someone's praises throughout the entire world as a proof for the person's greatness is not unique enough to be evidence of Ovidian influence, but the choice of words could be. The relative pronoun *quam* denotes Paula, and she is the object of praise which is expressed with the verb *canere*. This word does not appear to be the first choice if one wants to say 'to praise' in Latin. Common choices would be *praedicare*, *celebrare*, *laudare*, *memorare*. Also, *canere* is not a favorite word of Jerome's in the context of praise; he typically uses *praedicare*⁵¹ or *laudare*.⁵² Thus, it does not seem unlikely that Jerome borrowed

⁵⁰ Cain 2013, p. 126.

⁵¹ Hier. *epist.* 79. 2 *mihi a principio statim illud est praedicandum, quod quasi vicinae mortis praescius inter fulgorem palatii et honorum culmina, quae aetatem anteibant, sic vixit, ut se ad Christum crederet profecturum*; *epist.* 79. 5 *Ac ne quis me putet solas in Nebridio praedicare elemosynas, quamquam et has exercuisse sit magnum, de quibus dicitur: sicut aqua exstinguit ignem, ita elemosyna peccatum, ad virtutes eius ceteras veniam, quas singulas in paucis hominibus deprehendimus*; *epist.* 127. 1 *neque uero Marcellam tuam, immo meam et, ut uerius loquar, nostram, omniumque sanctorum et proprie Romanae urbis inclitum decus, institutis rhetorum praedicabo, ut exponam inlustrem familiam, alti sanguinis decus et stemmata per consules et praefectos praetorio decurrentia.*

⁵² Hier. *epist.* 54. 1-2 *inpetravim in unica filia, quod vivens ipsa possederat. habes praeterea generis tui grande privilegium, quod exinde a Camillo vel nulla vel rara vestrae familiae scribitur secundos nosse concubitus, ut non tam laudanda sis, si vidua perseveres, quam execranda, si id Christiana non serves, quod per tanta saecula gentiles feminae custodierunt. Taceo de Paula et Eustochio, stirpis vestrae floribus, ne per occasionem exhortationis tuae illas laudare videar, Blesillamque praetereo, quae*

the words in this passage from Ovid, and if so, the use can be labelled an allusion.

In the depiction of Paula's departure from Italy her children implore her to stay. Jerome writes the following about her: *Et tamen siccos oculos tendebat ad caelum* (epist. 108. 6. 3). Cain states that *oculos ad caelum tendere* is used only in postclassical literature, but then adduces an example from Ovid:⁵³ *ad caelum-que oculos et eodem brachia tollens* (met. xv. 570). He points out that the verb is different. In fact, Jerome and Ovid share only two words: *caelum* and *oculos*. It appears Ovid was not the source here, especially since there is another (very classical) author, namely Virgil, who used almost the same words (*Aen.* II. 403-406):

Ecce trahebatur passis Priameia virgo
crinibus a templo Cassandra adytisque Minervae,
ad caelum *tendens* ardentia lumina frustra,
lumina, nam teneras arcebant vincula palmas.

Though Jerome replaced the poetical *lumina* with *oculos*, the choice of *tendere* as the verb is the same. What makes it much more likely that we have a Virgilian paraphrase here, is the context. In this passage, after the bloody capture of Troy, King Priam's daughter Cassandra is dragged away from the altar of Minerva. The goddess Minerva belonged to the Capitoline Triad, the city gods of Rome.⁵⁴ In Jerome's narration Paula is torn away from Rome and her family. Additionally, Cassandra was a priestess of Apollo and a virgin (until her brutal rape by Ajax). Paula was a consecrated widow, which was in Jerome's terms the second stage of virginity. She devoted her life to serving the Christian God. Jerome may have had these parallels in mind while writing. If so, it is probable that Jerome borrowed these words from Virgil, not Ovid, for the purpose of dramatizing Paula's departure.

Furthermore, in the same paragraph, the ship floats away from the shore with the following words: *sulcabat interim navis mare*

maritum suum, tuum secuta germanum in brevi vitae spatio tempora virtutum multa conplevit.; epist. 127. 1 *nihil in illa laudabo, nisi quod proprium est et in eo nobilius, quod opibus et nobilitate contempta facta est paupertate et humilitate nobilior.*

⁵³ Cain 2013, p. 186.

⁵⁴ See Krause 1989.

(*epist.* 108. 6. 5) Cain adduces the following passage (*met.* iv. 706-708):

Ecce, velut navis praefixo concita rostro
sulcat aquas iuvenum sudantibus acta lacertis,
sic fera dimotis impulsu pectoris undis;

It is mentioned that '*sulcare* is used occasionally in classical poetry in a nautical context', as in Verg. *Aen.* x. 197 and Sil. vii. 363.⁵⁵ These small lexical similarities are not enough to pinpoint Ovid as an inspiration.

In the seventh paragraph of letter 108 Jerome continues the description of Paula's sea trip (*epist.* 108. 7. 2):

Inter Scyllam et Charybdim Adriatico se credens pelago quasi
per stagnum venit Methonen

Cain adduces:

Non ideo debet pelago se credere, siqua
audet in exiguo ludere cumba lacu. (*Ov. trist.* ii. 329-330)

Cain does not make an explicit assumption here about whether or not the choice of words is influenced by Ovid. He just writes that the construction *se credere pelago* appears only once before Jerome – in Ovid – and that Jerome used *mare* for sea earlier, so his use of *pelagus* here is merely lexical variation.⁵⁶ There is at least one similar use in the Aeneid,⁵⁷ but overall Virgil does not provide, as before, any single passage that can be identified as the inspiration for Jerome's wording. The word *pelagus* itself is quite frequent in the Aeneid and appears in other classical poets; it has a poetical flavor, also due to its Greek origin (πέλαγος). Jerome uses it six times in his letters, seventeen times or so in his other works. In contrast, he uses the word *mare*, the standard Latin word for 'sea', some 440 times.

So, Jerome's use of *pelagus* is poetic – but is it Ovidian? Three similarities between Jerome's wording and the Ovidian verse are apparent, but again, the fact that there is no connection of

⁵⁵ Cain 2013, p. 191.

⁵⁶ Cain 2013, p. 201.

⁵⁷ Verg. *Aen.* v. 546 *rursus agam pelago et ventis dare vela iubebo?*

content whatsoever in the use of these common words leads to the conclusion that Jerome is not using Ovid here. He narrates Paula's journey, with an implicit hint at the dangers of sea travel; Ovid says that one (*aliqua*) should not trust oneself to the dangers of the sea just because one dares to play around with a boat in a tiny pond.⁵⁸ The passage was not demonstrably influenced by Ovid.

In the next passage, Cain provides another problematic passage (*epist.* 108. 7. 1):

Vidensque cellulas, in quibus illa [scil. Flavia Domitilla]
longum martyrium duxerat, sumptis alis Hierosolymam et
sancta loca videre cupiebat.

Cain cites the following Ovidian verses:

Tartara iussus adit *sumptis* Caducifer *alis* (*fast.* IV. 605)
vimque parat, quam nos *sumptis* effugimus *alis*. (*met.* v. 288)
plus homine est, *alasque* pedes *sumpsisse* putares. (*met.* XI. 337)

One could add:

Nescius ad*sumptis* Priamus pater Aesacon *alis* (*met.* XII. 1)

Cain gives two instances for comparison in which *alas sumere* is used by Ambrose,⁵⁹ but both undoubtedly refer to Isaiah:

qui autem sperant in domino mutabunt fortitudinem,
adsumunt pinnae sicut aquilae, current et non laborabunt,
ambulabunt et non deficient (Is. 40. 31)

The use of *alae* instead of *pinnae* is the wording from the Old Latin Bible text,⁶⁰ so Ambrose did not use Ovid here. Did Jerome in *epist.* 108?

In Jerome's case, the ablative absolute describes the intended speed of Paula's travel in a metaphorical way, but the reader learns

⁵⁸ Of course, the dangers of sea travel cannot count as a common feature since it was common knowledge that going on a sea trip could easily end in death – a fact underlying both passages.

⁵⁹ Cain 2013, p. 198, Ambr. *Isaac* 8. 78 *sumamus igitur has alas, quae sicut flammae ad superiora dirigant; virg.* 1. 8. 44 *Sume igitur alas, uirgo, sed spiritus, ut superuoles uitia, si contingere cupis Christum: In altis habitat et humilia respicit et species eius sicut cedrus Libani, quae comam nubibus, radicem terris inserit.*

⁶⁰ Gryson 1993, pp. 943–4 *adsumunt alas quasi aquilae.*

in the next sentence that the winds did not favor her sea trip (*tardi erant ei venti*). The phrase ends up expressing Paula's burning desire to go to Jerusalem, a desire fueled by her visit to the shrine of Flavia Domitilla.

In two of Ovid's uses, *sumptis alis* describes fast and lofty movement, also in a metaphorical sense. The third case is trickier: the phrase foreshadows Daedalion's metamorphosis into a bird, but it also describes his speed before his transformation. As the fourth example illustrates, *sumptis alis* can also mean quite literally 'to grow wings'.

Overall, Jerome's metaphorical use of *sumptis alis* is similar to Ovid's. Nevertheless, he was writing for an audience well acquainted with the bible. Among these readers, the phrase would primarily suggest the famous passage from Isaiah, including the condition for sprouting wings: *qui sperant in Domino*. If this subtext is present, implicit praise for Paula is added to the narration. In the context of Jerome's narrative, the allusion also makes sense: Paula's faith and trust in God was increased by seeing Domitilla's shrine. However, a usage of Ovid cannot be excluded. The metaphorical use of the phrase, the ablative construction, and the scarcity of the phrase in Latin literature could hint at a contamination of allusions.

Cain suggests that the cited *plus homine est, alasque pedes sumpsisse putares* (*met.* XI. 337) has influenced *tanta velocitate reversa est ut avem putares* (*epist.* 108. 14. 3). The only common lexical feature, *putares*, is clearly too weak to prove an Ovidian usage, but in this case the result may be somewhat dependent on the above findings. If *sumptis alis* is an allusion to Ovid, this line is too. Its is a metaphorical description of Paula, who after visiting the cells of monks in Egypt now desires to return to Palestine and succeeds in doing so by means of a speedy sea trip.

Another case to discuss (*epist.* 108. 14. 1):

Per harenas mollissimas pergentium vestigia subtrahentes latamque heremi vastitatem veniam ad Aegyptum fluvium Sior

Cain comments that the 'disappearance of footprints in the sand is a common metaphor for the impermanence of human life'⁶¹ and cites an Ovidian passage (*Ib.* 421-424):

⁶¹ Cain 2013, p. 298.

Utque per alternos unda labente recursus
 Subtrahitur presso mollis harena pedi,
 Sic tua nescio qua semper fortuna liquescat,
 Lapsaque per medias effluat usque manus.

On the lexical level there are three identical words used in both passages: *harena*, *mollis*, and *subtrahere*. These common features are rather weak for the argument, since *mollis* is an adjective used to describe the nature of ground in general,⁶² and *subtrahere* is probably the word to use in Latin when describing the gradual disappearance of prints on sand. Furthermore, in Ovid, the soft sand (*mollis harena*) is flushed away (*subtrahitur*) by the sea; in Jerome, the narrator moves on in his narration through the soft sands (*per harenas mollissimas*) of the desert which swallow up (*subtrahentes*) the traveler's footprints (*pergentium vestigia*). So, in Ovid's case the sea makes the prints in the sand disappear, in Jerome's case the sand makes footprints disappear. That is a major difference in terms of content. Also, the motif of the impermanence of life can only be identified in Ovid's passage, not in Jerome's; his description adds some adventurous flavor to his narration.⁶³

As the letter continues, Jerome describes Paula's daughter, Eustochium, who is afraid her mother will die:

Quibus illa precibus, quibus lamentis et gemitu inter iacentem matrem et specum domini discurrere ne privaretur tanto contubernio, ne illa absente viveret, ut eodem feretro portaretur. (Hier. *epist.* 108. 27. 3)

Cain describes it as the 'romanticized ideal of loved ones dying, or wanting to die, at or around the same time to avoid living without their beloved'.⁶⁴ He adduces many examples from Ovid,

⁶² Varro *rust.* 1. 20. 2 *tum ita subigendum, ut minutatim adsuefaciant et ut tironem cum ueterano adiungant (imitando enim facilius domatur), et primum in aequo loco et sine aratro, tum eo leui, principio per harenam aut molliorem terram.*

⁶³ A much more influential passage for late antique Christian authors on shifting sands, though not on footprints would be Jesus' allegory about the two houses, one built on stone, the other one sand. Yet, there is no connection here either, cf. Matth. 7. 24.

⁶⁴ Cain 2013, p. 436.

which only show that the motif is prominent in his works.⁶⁵ However, lexical similarities cannot be detected. Cain himself adds that the motif can also be found in Horace, Virgil, and Propertius, establishing it as a commonplace.

Finally, the passages in which Cain deals with Jerome's poems engraved on Paula's tombstone and on the door of the Cave of the Nativity will be examined. Two of Cain's observations were previously discussed by Consolino.⁶⁶

In the last verse of Jerome's poem, Cain identifies something 'characteristically Ovidian':⁶⁷ *Pauperiem Christi et Bethlemetica rura secuta est.* (*epist.* 108. 33. 2. 5) The same verse ending, preceded by a disyllabic word, can be found seven times in Ovid.

'Me miserum!' dicturus erat: vox nulla secuta est! (*Ov. met.* III. 201)

'Saevitiae monimenta meae'; res dicta secuta est. (*Ov. met.* IV. 550)

FleBILE principium melior fortuna secuta est. (*Ov. met.* VII. 518)

Si verum profitemur, amor. tamen illa secuta est. (*Ov. met.* IX. 738)

Tmolus ad os Phoebi: vultum sua silva secuta est. (*Ov. met.* XI. 164)

Hactenus Aeacides: vocem gravis hasta secuta est (*Ov. met.* XII. 82)

Somnus abit, somnique fugam lux alma secuta est. (*Ov. met.* XV. 664)

The quantity of verses alone does not mean much. The 'phrase' in itself is not more than a common form of a common verb

⁶⁵ *Ov. am.* II. 18. 38 *et comes extincto Laodamia viro; ars.* III. 17-18 *Respice Phylaciden et quae comes isse marito / fertur et ante annos occubuisse suos; met.* III. 473 *nunc duo concordēs anima moriemur in una; met.* IV. 108 *repperit, 'una duos' inquit 'nox perdet amantes; met.* IV. 151-153 *persequar extinctum letique miserrima dicar / causa comesque tui: quique a me morte revelli / heu sola poteris, poteris nec morte revelli'; met.* V. 72-73 *circumspexit Athin seque adclinavit ad illum / et tulit ad manes iunctae solacia mortis; met.* VIII. 708-710 *poscimus, et quoniam concordēs egimus annos, / auferat hora duos eadem, nec coniugis umquam / busta meae videam, neu sim tumultandus ab illa.*

⁶⁶ See above, p. 191.

⁶⁷ Cain 2013, p. 478.

which fits well in the last feet of the verse. There is no contextual similarity. There is thus insufficient evidence to prove that Jerome took the phrase from the *Metamorphoses*.

In Jerome's poem that was inscribed upon the door of the Cave of the Nativity, Cain also sees some Ovidian traces (*epist.* 108. 33. 3, vv. 3-4):

Fratrem, cognatos, Romam, patriamque relinquens,
divitias, subolem Bethlemiti conditur antro.

The verse of interest is: *exul agor cineresque viri patriamque relinquo* (*Ov. her.* 7. 115). The phrase *patriam relinquere* is common in Latin literature, especially in Cicero. It is very hard to identify it as originating from one specific author. Therefore it must be disregarded.

The second verse of the above quotation has, according to Cain, a 'classicizing flourish' achieved by an Ovidian (and Propertian IV. 4. 3) choice of words.⁶⁸

Et specus in media virgis ac vimine densus
efficiens humilem lapidum conpagibus arcum
uberibus fecundus aquis; ubi conditus antro
Martius anguis erat, cristis praesignis et auro (*Ov. met.*
III. 29-32)

Cain argues that Jerome usually uses *specus* or *spelunca* for 'cave', but suddenly chooses *antrum*, combined with *condere*⁶⁹ – a convincing piece of evidence. One must also consider that the cave described by Ovid is holy to Mars, whereas Jerome is talking about the cave in which Jesus supposedly was born. Therefore, the phrase *conditur antro* could truly be an Ovidian allusion.

3. New Usages

I wish to add some new passages of Ovid used by Jerome.

Jerome uses the phrase *inoffenso pede* three times in his letters:

Cumque causas et rationes quaereret singularum, in quibusdam haesitavi, in aliis *inoffenso cucurri pede*, in plerisque simpliciter ignorantiam confessus sum. (*epist.* 77. 7)

⁶⁸ See Cain 2013, p. 482.

⁶⁹ See Cain 2013, p. 482.

Cypriani opuscula semper in manu teneat, Athanasii epistulas et Hilarii libros *inoffenso decurrat pede*. (*epist.* 107. 12)

Omnes inter Africam Italiamque insulae hoc rumore repletae sunt et *inoffenso pede* longius gaudia cucurrere. (*epist.* 130. 6)

He also uses it once in his commentary on Ezekiel:

Animalia currebant et reuertebantur; essetque quaestio nisi sequeretur: in similitudinem fulguris coruscantis, quod Hebraico sermone dicitur 'bezec' et interpretatus est Symmachus: quasi species radii fulguris quomodo crebris micat ignibus aether, et in ictu oculi atque momento discurrent fulgura et reuertuntur non amittentia matricem et, ut ita dicam, fontem ignis atque materiam, ita et haec animalia cum *inoffenso pergant pede*, ad priora festinant. (*in Hiez.* I. 1. 402-410)

In another instance the phrase is slightly varied:

In una igitur Christi semita omnes iustitiae reperiuntur, et propterea eam suo calcauit et triuit pede, ut quicumque per eam uoluerit ambulare, *cursu ambulet inoffenso*. (*in Es.* VIII. 26. 7. 12)

Here the word *pede* is replaced by *cursu* because *pede* had already been used earlier in the sentence.

In two of these cases the phrase would fit into a hexameter: *sūnt ēt inōffēsō pēdē* (*epist.* 130. 6), *inōffēsō pērgānt pēdē* (*in Hiez.* I. 1. 409).

As a simple construction, *pedem offendere* appears once in the Corpus Caesarianum,⁷⁰ and after that only as a citation or quotation of *in manibus portabunt te ne forte offendant ad lapidem pes tuus* (Ps. 90. 12) by Christian authors from Tertullian on. Though minor variations occur, such as *petra* instead of *lapis*, or Augustine's playful *non lapidem ubi pedem offendant* (*serm.* 289. 1310. 13), the biblical phrase is always recognizable by syntax, vocabulary and context. Additionally, it never appears as the ablative phrase *inoffenso pede* among these authors.

As a participle construction the phrase can be found only three times before Jerome: Once in Tibullus, but not in the

⁷⁰ *Bell. Hisp.* 23. 4 ita cum eius compar proelium facere coepisset cum undique se circumueniri animum aduertisset, integer regressus pedem offendit.

ablative,⁷¹ and twice in Ovid. The first Ovidian passage is from the *Amores* and presents the words in the accusative but in the same sense as in Jerome's usages (*am.* I. 6. 7-8):

Ille per excubias custodum leniter ire
monstrat, inoffensos dirigit ille pedes.

In this passage, it is the god Amor who guides (*dirigit*) the lover's feet so that he does not stumble. This is meant both literally (sneaking through dark streets to meet his mistress at night) and metaphorical (successful in his quest for love).

The second instance is from the *Tristia* and has the participle in the ablative (*trist.* III. 4a. 33-34):

nam pede inoffenso spatium decurrere uitae
dignus es et fato candidiore frui.

Here the sad poet's persona advises his friend, who desires a brighter destiny (*fato candidiore frui*) than the poet's, not to reach out for fame and things that are too high because they lead only to misfortune; his friend ought to run his life's course without stumbling (*inoffenso pede*). The action described is metaphorical.

Having understood these verses, Jerome's use of the phrase in the cited passages will now be examined.

Letter 77 is an epitaph on Fabiola, an ascetic noblewoman from Rome and a friend of Jerome's. In his laudation he depicts Fabiola during her visit in Bethlehem asking him questions about scripture. She was especially interested in passages from Exodus detailing the places where the people of Israel stayed during their flight from Egypt. Jerome admits that he had trouble answering some of her questions, others he could explain well – *in aliis inoffenso cucurri pede* (*Hier. epist.* 77. 7). The phrase is metaphorical, *currere* means 'to explain' in this instance. The ablative *inoffenso pede* shows that he had no difficulties answering.

Letter 107 contains advice about the education of an ascetic girl. Jerome advises her mother Laeta that her daughter should mainly read the Bible, but orthodox writings are allowed too, especially those of Cyprian, Athanasius, and Hilarius. Here, the

⁷¹ Tib. I. 7. 61-62 *Te canet agricola, a magna cum venerit urbe / serus inoffensum rettuleritque pedem.*

word *decurrere* is a metaphorical word for 'reading'; in combination with *inoffenso pede* it could be translated as 'to breeze through without stumbling'. Hence, the reading recommendations are worth a quick scan.

In letter 130, Jerome writes to Demetrias, a noble girl from a famous family who took a vow of consecrated virginity. Virgilian *Fama* rushes through the cities of Italy and Africa,⁷² accompanied by joy (*gaudia*), running quite far (*longius cucurrere*). The ablative *inoffenso pede* means that the act of running is uninterrupted.

The fourth case is from Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel. The phrase describes the movement of the creatures in Ezekiel's vision (Hiez. 1). The creatures (*animalia*) move uninterrupted: *inoffenso pede* (in Hiez. 1. 1. 409).

In the last case Jerome explains in his commentary on Isaiah that all justice/righteousness is found on the way of Christ, and if one walks on this path, one does not stumble. The situation is metaphorical, but the use of the phrase *inoffenso pede/cursu* is used to describe real movement.

Now, Psalm 90 (91) is about the *protection* God provides: the faithful man is carried by God's angels so that no harm befalls him, not even a stone in his way. Jerome's use of the phrase *pedem offendere* differs greatly from the psalmist's, but it is very similar to Ovid's. Like *sumptis alis*⁷³ it describes the mode of an action: in both Jerome and Ovid the agent runs or walks (*currere/ambulare/ire*) without tripping, i.e. he does something successfully or without trouble, if used as a metaphor.

Thus, common features can be identified on the lexical, syntactical, and semantic level, though it is hard to see any close contextual similarity. The phrase is simply too short and unspecific. Then again, the poetic rhythm in two cases and especially the gap of evidence between Ovid and Jerome makes it problematic to dismiss completely. Jerome may not have wanted to draw attention to Ovid in these cases, but perhaps he wanted to add some poetic coloring using a phrase he picked up from Ovid's poems.

⁷² A study of this passage will appear in the forthcoming dissertation by Angela Zielinski Kinney on *fama*.

⁷³ See above, pp. 196-197.

Another Ovidian usage can be found in Jerome's letter to Sabinianus, a monk and deacon from Jerome's cenobitic community in Bethlehem who tried to seduce a nun: *Stabas deinceps in choro psallentium et inpudicis nutibus loquebaris* (epist. 147. 4). There are a few passages with motifs that have parallels in Ovidian poetry though they cannot be considered usages. But one passage may contain more than just a similar motif. Ovid writes (*am.* I. 4. 17-19):

Me specta nutusque meos vultumque loquacem;
excipe furtivas et refer ipsa notas.
verba superciliis sine voce loquentia dicam

Jerome describes Sabinianus' behavior as *inpudicis nutibus loquebaris*. Ovid's narrator tells his beloved to look at him and his signs (*nutus*) and speaking expression (*vultum loquacem*); she should receive the secret signs (*furtivas notas*) and give them back to him. He would say (*dicam*) speaking words (*verba loquentia*) with his eyebrows without voice.

The common lexical feature is the phrase *nutu/nutibus loqui*. Already in antiquity it was observed that another form of communication existed next to spoken language,⁷⁴ Augustine even considered gesture a preliminary stage of verbal expression:⁷⁵ it was realized by signs given by hands, eyes, eyebrows, lips, and facial expressions in general. These signs were called *νῦματα* or *nutus*. So, speaking with *nutus* can be considered the general way to describe non-verbal communication. Nevertheless, the combination of *nutu/nutibus* and *loqui* is rare in antiquity. In some cases it is used to indicate an amount of power, implying that spoken words were not even needed to convey an order.⁷⁶ In other cases,

⁷⁴ See Sittl 1890, p. 211.

⁷⁵ Aug. *conf.* I. 6. 8 *et ecce paulatim sentiebam, ubi essem, et uoluntates meas uolebam ostendere eis, per quos implerentur, et non poteram, quia illae intus erant, foris autem illi nec ullo suo sensu ualebant introire in animam meam. itaque iactabam membra et uoces, signa similia uoluntatibus meis, pauca quae poteram, qualia poteram: non enim erant ueresimilia.*

⁷⁶ Lact. *inst.* II. 14. 9 *Nam Plato etiam naturas eorum in Symposio exprimere conatus est et Socrates esse circa se adsidium daemona loquebatur, qui puero sibi adhaesisset, cuius nutu et arbitrio sua uita regeretur, Plin. paneg. 88. 1: Pletrique principes, cum essent civium domini, libertorum erant servi: horum consiliis, horum nutu regebantur; per hos audiebant, per hos loquebantur; per hos praeturae*

nutus are the signs made by someone who for some reason can or will not speak.⁷⁷

There are two more examples for the use of *nutu/nutibus loqui* in the *Amores*; all three are interdependent.⁷⁸ In the *Ars amandi* one finds instructions similar to those in the *Amores*,⁷⁹ in Paris' letter to Helena in the *Heroides* he remembers how he was watching her and used to give secret signs.⁸⁰ Priapus gives *nutus* to his desired Lotis in the *Fasti*.⁸¹ And, finally, in the *Metamorphoses* Ovid describes the secret love of Priam and Thisbe in its first stage.⁸² Though not in all instances *nutus* is combined with *loqui*, in each case the *nutus* replace verbal communication in an erotic context. Possibly, *nutus* as an erotic gesture has come into use only due to Ovid's literal influence.⁸³

Jerome uses *nutu/nutibus loqui* five times: one instance concerns deaf people,⁸⁴ another is the polemical mockery of an

etiam et sacerdotia et consulatus, immo ab his petebantur; Sulp. Sev. *chron.* 1. 4. 6 *ita turrim facere aggressi, quae caelo accederet, nutu Dei, ut officia operantium praepedirentur, a sueto sermonis genere multa diuerso neque ulli inuicem intellecto linguarum ritu loquebantur.*

⁷⁷ Lact. *inst.* vi. 10. 14 *primo nutibus uoluntatem suam significasse, deinde sermonis initia temptasse ac singulis quibusque rebus nomina inprimendo paulatim loquendi perfecisse rationem*; Aug. *quant. anim.* 18. 31 *constitue ergo quempiam ibi natum atque altum ubi homines non loquerentur, sed nutibus membrorumque motu cogitationes suas sibimet expromendas signarent*; the case of a mime in Claud. *Manl. Theod.* (*carm.* 17) 311-316 *nec molles egeant nostra dulcedine ludi: / qui laetis risum salibus mouisse facetus, / qui nutu manibusque loquax, cui tibia flatu, / cui plectro pulsanda chelys, qui pulpita socco / personat aut alte graditur maiore cothurno, / et qui magna leui detrudens murmura tactu.*

⁷⁸ Ov. *am.* II. 5. 13-16 *Ipse miser vidi cum me dormire putares / sobrius adposito crimina vestra mero / multa supercilio vidi vibrante loquentes / nutibus in vestris pars bona vocis erat*; with some variation: *am.* III. 11. 23-24 *Quid iuuenum tacitos inter convivia nutus / verbaque compositis dissimulata notis?*

⁷⁹ Ov. *ars* 1. 137-138 *Nil opus est digitis, per quos arcana loquaris, / nec tibi per nutus accipienda notast.*

⁸⁰ Ov. *her.* 16. 258 *Et modo per nutum signa tegenda dabam.*

⁸¹ Ov. *fast.* 1. 415-418 *at ruber, hortorum decus et tutela, Priapus / omnibus ex illis Lotide captus erat: / hanc cupit, hanc optat, sola suspirat in illa, / signaque dat nutu sollicitatque notis.*

⁸² Ov. *met.* IV. 63-64 *conscius omnis abest, nutu signisque loquuntur, / quoque magis tegitur, tectus magis aestuat ignis.*

⁸³ See Bömer 1996, p. 40.

⁸⁴ Hier. *in Gal.* 1. 374. 50 *qui autem huic scrupulo satisfacere conatur, prius illud tentabit asserere, quod nutibus quoque et quotidiana conuersatione, et ut ita dixerim, totius corporis loquente gestu, surdi possunt euangelium discere: deinde*

enemy,⁸⁵ but three cases, including the one cited above, show contextual similarities:

abutendum est hoc testimonio et aduersum ecclesiae feminas, quae ambulant collo extento, et nutibus loquuntur oculorum, et plaudunt tam manibus quam pedibus, et ut composito incedant gradu, non naturam sequuntur ducem, sed histrones redimunt praeceptores. (*in Es.* II. 3. 16. 23-27)

This citation is a satirical description of ‘pseudo-chaste’ women. Here, *nutibus loquuntur oculorum* (l. 25) means that the women talk with winks, and as Jerome is concerned with bad examples of female ascetics, they have naughty intentions.

Another instance (*epist.* 117. 6):

personabit interim aliquis cantator ad mensam et inter psalmos dulci modulatione currentes, quoniam alienas non audebit uxores, te, quae custodem non habes, saepius respectabit. loquetur nutibus et, quicquid metuet dicere, significabit affectibus.

This too is about ascetic women who permit an entertainer to sing psalms during meals, but the singer takes advantage of the situation and expresses his erotic interest for the lady by signs. The situation in all three cases is somewhat similar to Ovid’s examples: a person communicates his or her erotic interest by means of voiceless signs.

But back to the passages of main interest (*Hier. epist.* 147, *Ov. am.* I. 4. 17-19). Next to the lexical level with its semantic implications, the context of the two passages makes a strong argument for Jerome’s usage of Ovid. The narrator of the *Amores* goes to a dinner where, among other people, his beloved and her husband are present too. He instructs her throughout the poem on how to communicate with him. Jerome tells the reader that the monk Sabinianus found different ways to communicate with his beloved nun within the monastery walls since monastic discipline made it difficult for them to talk and flirt.

etiam hoc, quod dei sermo cui nihil surdum est, ad eas magis loquatur aures, de quibus et ipse ait in euangelio: qui habet aures audiendi, audiat.

⁸⁵ *Hier. c. Ioh.* 11. 19. 3 *Tu et chorus tuus canino risu, naribusque contractis, scabentes capita, delirum senem nutibus loquebamini.*

One occasion on which the monks would see the nuns was in church, and at this time Sabinianus would do as Jerome – and Ovid! – describes it. Though Jerome's description lacks all the circumstantial detail of Ovid's verses, it is nonetheless a short version of the elegiac persona's advice put into practice. It must be taken into account that in both cases the environment does not sanction the love affair of the two protagonists, the elegiac narrator's girl is married, the nun is married to Christ. On a narrative level the situations described are very similar. Additionally, Jerome's letter overall exhibits features of comedy, novel, and love elegy; it was probably written for entertainment. One example demonstrates how Jerome uses pagan literature to achieve a funny double entendre: When Sabinianus and his beloved nun meet in the Cave of Nativity, he alludes to the cave into which Aeneas and Dido go.⁸⁶ In that passage, it is spoken of *coniugium* or *conubium*, that is marriage – but it is also clear that 'marriage' is not exactly happening in this cave. So, when Sabinianus and his beloved nun meet in the cave in which Jesus supposedly was born and exchange gifts as a promise of future intercourse, it becomes funny if read with knowledge of the Virgilian passage – knowledge Jerome could expect from large parts of his readership. The use of *inpudicis nutibus loquebaris* works in a similar way: it evokes the educated reader's knowledge of the famous Ovidian poem(s). Therefore, one can assume an Ovidian allusion, mainly in Hier. *epist.* 147. 4 because the situational similarity to the dinner scene from the *Amores* is so strong, but the other two cases might be dependent on Ovid too.

4. Results

4.1 Overview

When dealing with many passages one loses a bird's eye view of the whole. Tables can help in drawing general conclusions.

⁸⁶ Hier. *epist.* 147. 6 *futuro matrimonio in spelunca illa uenerabili quasi quosdam obsides accipis capillos, sudariola infelicis et cingulum, dotale pignus, reportas; iuras ei te nullam similiter amaturum*; Verg. *Aen.* IV. 165-166 *speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem / deveniunt* and 171-172 *nec iam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem: / coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*.

Therefore, these two tables provide an overview of the findings of the last chapters. The first provides an overview of the verses that were used from Ovid; the second one will start with the passages in which Jerome uses Ovid.

Suggestions that could not be proven are not included in the tables. Some usages are marked with an * to indicate a certain level of residual doubt.

versus Ovidi	ubi apud Hieronymum	modus	nota
* <i>am.</i> I. 3. 25-26	<i>epist.</i> 108. 2. 1	allusion	<i>totus orbis</i> motif
<i>am.</i> I. 4. 17-19	<i>epist.</i> 147. 4, <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16, <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
* <i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8	<i>epist.</i> 77. 7; <i>epist.</i> 107. 12; <i>epist.</i> 130. 6; <i>in Hiez.</i> I. 1. 409; <i>in Es.</i> VIII. 26. 7. 12	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>
* <i>am.</i> I. 15. 8	<i>epist.</i> 108. 2. 1	allusion	<i>totus orbis</i> motif
* <i>am.</i> II. 5. 13-16	<i>epist.</i> 147. 4; <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16. 25, <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
<i>am.</i> III. 2. 83	<i>epist.</i> 123. 4	quotation	<i>promisit ocellis</i>
* <i>am.</i> III. 11. 23-24	<i>epist.</i> 147. 4, <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16. 25, <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
<i>ars</i> I. 516	<i>epist.</i> 22. 28	allusion	<i>pes in laxa pelle</i>
* <i>ars</i> I. 137-138	<i>epist.</i> 147. 4, <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16. 25, <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
* <i>ars.</i> II. 741-742	<i>epist.</i> 108. 2. 1	allusion	<i>totus orbis</i> motif
* <i>fast.</i> IV. 605	<i>epist.</i> 108. 7. 1	allusion	<i>sumptis alis</i> phrase
* <i>her.</i> 15. 28	<i>epist.</i> 108. 2. 1	allusion	<i>totus orbis</i> motif
<i>met.</i> I. 18-20	<i>in eccles.</i> 7. 15. 2	paraphrase	opposites in nature/chaos
<i>met.</i> I. 107-112	<i>in Es.</i> IX. 30. 26; <i>in Es.</i> IV. 11. 6. 28-32	paraphrase	description of the golden age
* <i>met.</i> III. 29-32	<i>epist.</i> 108. 33. 3	allusion	the holy cave
<i>met.</i> IV. 55-58	<i>in Os.</i> I. 2. 396-400	quotation	Semiramis
* <i>met.</i> IV. 63-64	<i>epist.</i> 147. 4, <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16, <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
* <i>met.</i> V. 288	<i>epist.</i> 108. 7. 1	allusion	<i>sumptis alis</i>

versus Ovidi	ubi apud Hieronymum	modus	nota
* <i>met.</i> XI. 337	<i>epist.</i> 108. 7. 1;	allusion	<i>sumptis alis, avem putares</i>
<i>Pont.</i> IV. 3. 49-50	<i>in eccles.</i> 9. 7/12. 1	allusion	<i>in rebus humanis ludit</i>
* <i>trist.</i> III. 4a. 33-34	<i>epist.</i> 77. 7, 107. 12, 130 6; <i>in Hiez.</i> 1. 1. 409; <i>in Es.</i> VIII. 26. 7. 12	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>

The preceding table can cause a misleading impression of the number of passages in Jerome's works that have been influenced by Ovid. Therefore, the second table will provide an overview where in Jerome's works Ovidian usages appear.

Hieronymus	quid Ovidi	modus	nota
<i>epist.</i> 22. 28	<i>ars</i> I. 516	allusion	<i>pes in laxa pelle</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 77. 7	<i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8, <i>trist.</i> III. 4a. 33-34	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 108. 2. 1	<i>am.</i> I. 3. 25-26, I. 15. 8, <i>ars</i> II. 741-742, <i>her.</i> 15. 28	allusion	<i>totus orbis motif</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 108. 7. 1	<i>fast.</i> IV. 605, <i>met.</i> V. 288, <i>met.</i> XI. 337	allusion	<i>sumptis alis</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 107. 12	<i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8, <i>trist.</i> III. 4a. 33-34	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 108. 14. 3	<i>met.</i> XI. 337	allusion	<i>avem putares</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 108. 33. 2	<i>met.</i> IX. 229	allusion	<i>inclita proles</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 108. 33. 3	<i>met.</i> III. 29-32	allusion	the holy cave <i>conditur antro</i>
* <i>epist.</i> 117. 6	<i>am.</i> I. 4. 17-19, <i>am.</i> II. 5. 13-16, <i>am.</i> III. 11. 23-24, <i>ars</i> I. 137-138, <i>met.</i> IV. 63-64		
<i>epist.</i> 123. 4	<i>am.</i> III. 2. 83	quotation	<i>promisit ocellis</i>
<i>epist.</i> 130. 6	<i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8, <i>trist.</i> III. 4a. 33-34	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>
<i>epist.</i> 147. 4	<i>am.</i> I. 4. 17-19, <i>am.</i> II. 5. 13-16, III. 11. 23-24; <i>ars</i> I. 137-138; <i>met.</i> IV. 63-64	allusion	<i>nutibus loquebaris</i>
<i>in eccles.</i> 7. 15. 2	<i>met.</i> I. 18-20	paraphrase	opposites in nature/ chaos

Hieronymus	quid Ovidi	modus	nota
<i>in eccles.</i> 9. 7/12. 1	<i>Pont.</i> IV. 3. 49-50	allusion	<i>in rebus humanis ludit</i>
* <i>in Hiez.</i> I. 3. 9. 2	<i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8, <i>trist.</i> 3. 4a. 33	allusion	<i>inoffenso pede</i>
* <i>in Es.</i> II. 3. 16. 25	<i>am.</i> I. 4. 17-19, <i>am.</i> II. 5. 13-16, <i>am.</i> III. 11. 23-24, <i>ars</i> I. 137-138, <i>met.</i> IV. 63-64		
<i>in Es.</i> IV. 11. 6. 28-32	<i>met.</i> I. 107-112	paraphrase	description of the golden age
* <i>in Es.</i> VIII. 26. 7. 12	<i>am.</i> I. 6. 7-8, <i>trist.</i> 3. 4a. 33 f.		<i>inoffenso pede</i>
<i>in Es.</i> IX. 30. 26	<i>met.</i> I. 107-112	paraphrase	description of the golden age
<i>in Os.</i> I. 2. 396-400	<i>met.</i> IV. 55-58	quotation	Semiramis

4.2 Jerome's Ovidian Library

The presented overview helps to ascertain which works of Ovid were known to Jerome. It can also be assumed that Jerome owned copies of them: When the book-loving Jerome came to Rome as a student from Pannonia, he had access to a truly vast selection of reading matter compared to the resources in his hometown. He must felt like he had ascended to book-heaven. There, Jerome probably made the decision for himself that he would never ever, wherever he might be, have to do without a fine collection of books. As he made senatorial friends such as Pam-machius, he started to assemble his own personal library by the usual way of copying others' books.⁸⁷ Jerome is unlikely to have read all the books copied for him – *before* requesting that they be copied. Some of Ovid's works were probably on something like a 'must-read list' of his. Consequently, they became also part of his own private library.

Of all Ovidian works the *Metamorphoses* is the one that certainly was known to Jerome. It is hard to imagine that Jerome,

⁸⁷ See Starr 1987; about Jerome's library Williams 2007; there will be a chapter about Jerome's library in the context of his success as a Christian writer and authority in the author's forthcoming dissertation *Hieronymus' Witwenbüchlein an Salvina* (epist. 79). *Ein Kommentar*.

being well acquainted with Virgil's epic, did not read at least one book from Ovid's follow-up masterpiece. The *Metamorphoses* is recommended by Quintilian too, who provides something like a reading guide in his book x of the *Institutiones*,⁸⁸ and Jerome would probably have been influenced by Quintilian's views.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, it is not evident that Jerome knew all 15 books of the *Metamorphoses*. Book 1 shows up twice in the table.⁹⁰ The fourth book is cited by Jerome very openly and precisely, so one must assume he knew this part of the epic well. The other books that occur in his works do not necessarily mean that Jerome knew them all: The phrase *sumptis alis* shows up in book five and eleven, but also in the *Fasti*. The possible allusion to the holy cave of Mars indicates Jerome's knowledge of book three, but doubts remain.

One should also take into account the *testimonium* in Jerome's commentary to Jonah, where he retails some of the content of the *Metamorphoses*: he knows about Daphne (*met.* I. 452-565), Phaeton's sisters (*met.* II. 340-366), and Jupiter's erotic disguises: a swan (*met.* VI. 109), a shower of gold (*met.* IV. 610-611), and a bull (*met.* II. 848-860).⁹¹ Knowledge of these stories need not have been acquired by personal reading. Most were well known, and all were metamorphoses. The examples for Jupiter's misbehavior are commonplace from the apologetic tradition. Only the mention of Phaeton's sisters, not Phaeton's tragic crash itself, seems a bit off. It is hard to imagine that Jerome would pick up the story without proper knowledge of the text. The mention of Daphne's story and Jupiter disguised as a shower of gold and as a bull give additional backing for the assumption that Jerome knew books 1, 2 and 4; it is possible that he knew 3, 5, and 11 as well.

Jerome's knowledge of the *Amores* can be proven by three allusions to book 1 and one citation from book 3. One instance

⁸⁸ Quint. *inst.* x. 1. 88.

⁸⁹ Jerome used educational material presented by Quintilian in his letter to Laeta, see Scourfield 1983, Katz 2007.

⁹⁰ See above, p. 208.

⁹¹ Hier. *in Ion.* 2. 57.

might indicate the knowledge of book 2, however, if Jerome had knowledge of book 1 and 3, it is unlikely that he did not know book 2.

Evidence for the *Ars amandi* is somewhat scarce since two allusions (*nutibus loquebaris*, *totus orbis* motif) could be known to Jerome from other works, such as the *Amores*. Nevertheless, the allusion to the passage in which the *praeceptor* explains the importance of the right looks to the male reader is clear proof of Jerome's knowledge of book 1. Together with the *Amores*, Jerome's knowledge of the *Ars amandi* might seem most reprehensible from a moral point of view. Jerome could not thunder against the evils of lust while enjoying poetry that celebrated the pleasures of flesh. So, the lack of obvious usages from the *Ars* and the *Amores* may be attributed to Jerome's unwillingness to openly cite or allude to them, but not necessarily to a lack of appreciation.

The *Fasti* appear only once, and the phrase used (*sumptis alis*) could have been taken from another Ovidian work. Therefore, it cannot be proven that Jerome knew the *Fasti*.

The *Heroides* too appear only once in the table, and only in connection with the *totus orbis* motif which, if truly Ovidian, could be taken from elsewhere too. Again, there is no evidence for Jerome's knowledge of this work. Jerome, concerned with the troubles women had to face as widows, would surely have been interested in the *Heroides*. So, if he had had a chance, he would have most probably read them with the prospect of reusing some of the material for his own writings.⁹² He either did not find anything useful in the book or did not know it.

The *Epistulae ex Ponto* are used only once by Jerome, as the table shows, but that allusion is quite clear. Therefore, Jerome knew book four. If one were to search for more Ovidian traces systematically, one might start with these poems.

There is no evidence for Jerome's knowledge of the *Tristia*. The phrase *inoffenso pede* is the only usage possibly stemming from

⁹² Jerome did not refrain from using pagan material to corroborate his arguments. A good example is his 'unscrupulous robbery of Porphyrius' (Hagendahl 1958, pp. 147-148) for the sake of arguing for a vegetarian diet.

the *Tristia* but it is also in book 1 of the *Amores*, which Jerome is assumed to have known. Thus, it cannot be proven that Jerome knew any of the five books of poetic letters.

Again, a short table will help to show which Ovidian works were known to Jerome:

Quae opera Ovidi noverit Hieronymus	Quos libros
<i>Amores</i>	I, **II, III
<i>Ars amandi</i>	I, *II
<i>Metamorphoses</i>	I, **II, *III, IV, *V, *XI
<i>Epistulae ex Ponto</i>	IV

Again, an * indicates some doubt; ** indicate an assumption mainly based on a preceding argument in this chapter. The *Fasti*, *Heroides*, and *Tristia* were excluded for reasons of weak evidence.

Overall, the list of Ovidian works for which evidence can be found is short. Also, it is not a surprising selection. The *Amores*, *Ars* and *Metamorphoses* are definitely the three masterpieces the philologist Jerome would have read at least in part. Only the evidence for the *Epistulae ex Ponto* is somewhat surprising.

It has already been mentioned that Jerome knew Quintilian and might have been influenced by his reading recommendations. Ovid, though *nimum amator ingenii sui*, was a recommended read.⁹³ In this context, Ovid's now lost *Medea* must be mentioned. Quintilian considered it implicitly as the best of Ovid's works.⁹⁴ If Jerome had access to the piece, he would surely have read it. Unfortunately, the tragedy is no longer extant and so it is impossible to find any evidence for it in Jerome's writings.

5. Final Remarks and Future Research

It was the intention of this paper to provide an overview for scholars, interested in Ovidian usages in Jerome's works, and lay a foundation for further work. To approach the problem systematically,

⁹³ Quint. *inst.* x. 1. 88, x. 1. 94.

⁹⁴ Quint. *inst.* x. 1. 98 *Ovidi Medea videtur mihi ostendere, quantum ille vir praestare potuerit, si ingenio suo imperare quam indulgere maluisset.*

methodology and *termini* have been suggested, new usages proposed, and interpretative thoughts presented.

It remains to think about what can be learned from it about Jerome. In his polemical letter to Sabinianus Jerome blackens the addressee with the following words (*epist.* 147. 3):

Haec tibi ridicula forte uideantur et, qui comoediis et lyricis scriptoribus et mimis Lentuli delectaris – quamquam ne ista quidem tibi prae nimia cordis hebitudine intellegenda concesserim – prophetarum uerba contemnas

‘This perhaps may seem ridiculous to you who enjoys the comedic poets, the lyricists, and the farces of Lentulus – though I believe that you are so blunt that you would not understand even these – and you despise the words of the prophets.’

Lentulus’ works are almost completely lost. He was a general under Caligula and wrote erotic poetry. Martial regarded him as one of his models.⁹⁵ Marcus Mercator (390-451) uses him as an example for particular obscene language.⁹⁶ In the cited passage, he is the third part, i.e. the pinnacle of the rhetorical climax.

Sabinianus is attacked by Jerome in two ways: First, it is held against him that he reads ‘immoral’ poetry, but the bigger insult is that Sabinianus enjoys light-hearted poetry while being too simple to understand it – ‘not even this stuff’ (*ne ista quidem*). Jerome considers it inferior poetry, but at the same time he implies there is an intellectual component in this ‘dirty stuff’. What a revealing comment!

Jerome was a complex character. He appreciated fine writing, even if it was incompatible with his beliefs, and he was by no means a literary omnivore, or random reader.⁹⁷ He knew all too well: *fugit irreparabile tempus*, and it was not worth wasting with bad literature.

Ovid could not have fallen into this category for Jerome: The poet’s unique, lofty style with his playful rather than obscene

⁹⁵ Courtney 1993, p. 345.

⁹⁶ See Konoppa 2005, p. 124.

⁹⁷ Adkin 2003, p. 2 describes Jerome as having an ‘omnivorous appetite for books’.

sexuality was too enchanting for Jerome to resist it entirely. But Ovid was not a poet close to Jerome's heart; if so, he could not have concealed it, as one can observe from his many usages of Virgil, for Jerome burned too much with the invigorating essence a good read would give him.

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Abstract

This paper explores the use of Ovid's poetry in the literary works of Jerome of Stridon. Though Jerome was a rigorous ascetic, he enjoyed pagan poetry, as can be seen by his repeated quotations of Virgil and Horace. It is much more difficult to find traces of Ovid in Jerome's writings. This paper does not simply add some new findings, but aims to present and re-evaluate by means of modern methodology the scattered evidence of Ovid's influence upon Jerome, discovered by scholars throughout the years. In addition, questions are raised about how Jerome knew Ovid's works, how he used them, and how he may have felt about the lofty poet himself.

AMY OH

OVID IN THE *DE SODOMA*

Introduction

De Sodoma, an epyllion of 167 lines, retells why and how Sodom was destroyed, covering the majority of *Genesis* 19.¹ The author of *De Sodoma* (hereafter *DS*) was not the only late antique poet to write on this episode, as several authors adapted biblical narratives in verse:² Prudentius, Claudius Marius Victor, the *Heptateuch* poet, and Avitus.³ However, the *DS* poet alone focuses on Lot and the fate of Sodom.

There is great potential in the Lot episode for an Ovidian treatment, starting from Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*. Lot's hospitality is tested by divine guests, much like Lycaon's; his wife disobeys divine instruction by looking back and is punished, like Orpheus; all of Sodom is destroyed by fire, like the earth where Phaethon crashed his father's chariot. For this reason, Ralph

¹ The standard text remains Peiper's (CSEL 23, 1891) although Morisi 1993 has published a more recent text and commentary. The poem was originally attributed to Cyprian, but modern consensus places the poem within the fifth century, leaving the authorship unknown. See Dando 1965 for his fanciful argument that Avitus composed the *De Sodoma*.

² Roberts 1985 has written the standard monograph on how Christian poets handled the Bible in verse and the different rhetorical ways that each poet adapted the text. Nodes 1993 also provides thorough analyses of how biblical epic can be read as exegesis. For late Latin intertextuality, see Kaufmann 2016; the reception of Ovid, see Miller – Newlands 2014.

³ Prud. *ham.* 723-776; Mar. Victor *aleth.* III. 683-781; Cypr. Gall. *Gen.* 636-679; Alc. Avit. *carm.* II. 326-407. The poets here are listed in chronological order. I accept Jakobi's 2010 conclusion that the Heptateuch poet's work follows Claudius Marius Victor's, which is dated to the 430s.

Hexter pointed out that this poem must be read as an Ovidian episode: he focuses primarily on the poem's direct allusion to Phaethon (vv. 107-113) which is told at the end of Book 1 and the start of Book 2 of the *Metamorphoses* (I. 747 - II. 400). Hexter argued that the structure of the Phaethon narrative, where his transformation occurs as a coda to the story, provides a blueprint for the *DS* poet, allowing him to invite readers to compare the true transformations brought about in Christian history with the false ones in Ovid.⁴

Other elements of the poem, including how the poet describes the transformation of Lot's wife (vv. 114-126), are dismissed and not examined.⁵ In this paper I will add that the poet uses Ovid by contrasting the narrative of *Genesis* 19 with the *Metamorphoses*, from Book 1 to beyond the Phaethon narrative, to draw a distinction between Lot and his wife. Unlike the other poets that treat the same story, the *DS* poet characterizes both members of the couple. Each is similar to characters within the *Metamorphoses*, but Lot escapes misfortune because of his faith and obedience. The same is not true for his wife.

Characterization of Lot

The poet quickly departs from Ovid in his characterization of Lot, who is portrayed in a positive light. According to the *DS* poet, Lot is more virtuous than everyone else in Sodom because of his

⁴ Hexter 1988, p. 5, and especially pp. 15-19.

⁵ Hexter 1988, p. 15. With regard to Lot's wife, Hexter claimed that the poet seems less interested in the process of transformation than Ovid. Hexter first cataloged minor instances in the poem where the poet challenges pagan poetry, beginning with the mention of Iris in line 7. It is clear that the *DS* poet demonstrates his knowledge of Ovid even earlier. In the first verse, the poet tells us that Ovid is part of the inspiration for his poem. First, the meter echoes the opening lines of the *Metamorphoses*. Compare *In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas* (met. I. 1) with *Iam deus omnipotens primaevi tempora saeculi* (*DS* 1). For emphasis on God's place in time, see Claudius Marius Victor's opening to the *Alethia*: *ante polos caelique diem mundique tenebras*. For a similar metrical line, compare the *Heptateuch* poet's first verse of *Genesis*: *Principio dominus caelum terramque locavit*. Second, note especially the monosyllabic opening and the similar clausulae in the second half of the line. Whatever else might have taken place in the world's history, or whatever may come as Ovid suggests with 'in', God has already (*iam*) been there.

hospitality and his heroic heterosexuality.⁶ As a man *de stirpe piorum* (v. 30), he is like a fertile and productive tree: *solet utilis arbor in silvis latitare ferens velut hospita fructus* (vv. 32-33). As soon as he sees two strangers on the road, disguised angels sent to warn him of Sodom's coming destruction, Lot welcomes them. The poet makes clear that Lot is unaware of his guests' identities: *quamquam divinos nescius ultro / advocat, adpellat, patrio veneratur honore* (vv. 35-36). In *Genesis*, Lot knew who his visitors were: *cum vidisset surrexit et iivit obviam eis adoravitque pronus in terra* (Gen. 19. 1). Claudius Marius Victor chooses to be more explicit, writing that Lot was allowed to recognize his guests and give them the proper hospitality:⁷

Qui cum miro splendore videret
angelicos radiare viros, ratus adfore caelo
cui mentem deus ipse dabat, prostratus adoratur

'When he saw the angelic men shining with an amazing brilliance, having thought that they were from heaven (God alerted him), he fell to his knees and worshiped them.'

The *Heptateuch* poet follows *Genesis* more closely, suggesting that Lot knew the identity of his visitors by his immediate reverence:⁸

Cumque viros simili lustrasset corpore claros
Pronus adoratos consueta ad limina duxit.

'And after he had seen the brilliant men with bodies similar to one another's, he prostrated himself and led them honored to his customary threshold.'

Prudentius and Avitus do not discuss Lot receiving the angels, as the primary focus for them is his wife's wickedness, her similarity to Eve.⁹ Lot's ignorance, then, is conspicuous by comparison and it contrasts with a similar narrative from the start of the *Metamorphoses*. Immediately in Book 1, we meet Lycaon, a character who hosts a divine visitor in disguise, Jupiter. The difference

⁶ Lot's relationship with Abraham and his own relative imperfection are not mentioned in this poem. For discussions on the latent (or patent) reference to homosexuality in *Genesis*, see Bailey 1955 and Boswell 1980, pp. 92-98.

⁷ *Aleth.* III. 685-687.

⁸ *Cypr. Gall. gen.* 637-638.

⁹ *Prud. ham.* 738-756; *Alc. Avit. carm.* II. 326.

between Lot and Lycaon is evident. Lycaon knows who his visitor is but wishes to test him, proving his home *inhospita* and worthy of destruction and proving himself wicked and worthy of his transformation into a wolf (*met.* I. 218-223).¹⁰ Lot does not know but makes an extended effort, *enisus longis precibus* (v. 38), to host them, proving himself worthy to be saved.

When the Sodomites arrive at his door, intent on attacking his guests, Lot goes so far as to offer his two daughters in order to protect the two young men.¹¹ The Sodomites are not interested in his daughters and decide, instead, to pursue Lot himself. The verse in *Genesis* emphasizes the crowd's force at this point in the narrative: '*vimque faciebant Loth vehementissime iam prope erat ut refringerent fores*' (19. 9). Claudius Marius Victor (*aleth.* III. 698-710) and the *Heptateuch* poet (*gen.* 649-651) both describe how the Sodomites break through the door but are immediately blinded. The *DS* poet, however, focuses on how Lot responds to the crazed mob and he is, once again, likened to a tree (vv. 64-68):

turbidus hiberno dum volvitur impete torrens
rivorum innumeros uno pede devehit amnes,
si qua illic arbor rapidis offenditur undis
haut mansura diu, quantum radice licebit
crinitas durare moras, ubi subter aderam
perdit humum, circumfosso iam caudice pendens
huc illuc certam differt incerta ruinam

'While a turbid torrent rolls forward with a wintry force, while it carries off the countless streams of rivers from one source, if any tree there is struck by the rapid waves, not at all able to remain there for long, as much as it is allowed to tolerate the delays imposed by hairs spreading from the root, where it loses hold of the ground half-eaten underneath, hanging on from its trunk, dug up on all sides, the tree, wavering here and there, puts off certain ruin.'

As Lot attempts to avoid an attack and figuratively takes on the form of a long-suffering tree, one may recall Daphne who, in

¹⁰ The *DS* poet later remarks that Sodom was destroyed because it was *inhospita* (v. 128).

¹¹ Lot's proposal here has other precedents, e.g. *Iud.* 19. 22.

order to escape sexual assault, was transformed into a laurel tree upon arriving at the waters of her father, Peneus (*met.* I. 548-552). Here the difference is that the chronology of Lot's story works in reverse. He is like a tree in the middle of a violent onrush of water and is subsequently rescued for standing his ground against his would-be assailants. In spite of the similarity in circumstance with Daphne's story, the imagery of Lot's resistance is more heroic and reminiscent of Aeneas, like an oak tree in the strength of his resolve to leave for Italy in spite of Dido's pleas (*Aen.* IV. 441-449),¹² or even Achilles, withstanding the mighty torrents of Scamandros (*Il.* XXI. 237-327). Although he is *like* a tree fending off unwanted sexual advances, Lot is never actually transformed. He remains as he was: father, husband, host, and hero; his nature allows him to be unchanged.

Once Lot evades the grasp of the Sodomites, he receives a message from the angels about what his next steps should be. In this part of the story, the *DS* poet makes a clear reference to Deucalion and Pyrrha from *met.* I. 313-415. As the one meant to survive what happens in Sodom, Lot quickly tells his family what is happening (v. 79 *generos citus adloquitur*) and takes immediate action. The speed with which he responds to the angels' directive is not mentioned in *Genesis*. Despite Lot's apprehension and hesitation, he is able to depart from Sodom and take refuge in nearby Segor. In Ovid, Deucalion and Pyrrha are saved from the flood because, like Lot, *sapiens iustique colonus, / unus erat meminisse deum* ('He, a wise man, and cultivator of justice, was the only one to remember God': vv. 31-32), they show exceptional virtue (*met.* I. 322-323):

non illo melior quisquam nec amantior aequi
vir fuit aut illa metuentior ulla deorum

'There was no man better or more just than he,
And no woman revered the gods more than she'¹³

¹² *Aen.* IV. 441-449: *ac velut annoso validam cum robore quercum / Alpini Boreae nunc hinc nunc flatibus illinc / eruere inter se certant; it stridor, et altae / consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes; / ipsa haeret scopulis et quantum vertice ad auras / aetherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit: / haud secus adsiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros / tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas; / mens immota manet, lacrimae volvuntur inanes.*

¹³ Trans. Lombardo 2010, p. 14.

Once they decide that they must rely on divine instruction as to how to proceed post-flood, they, like Lot once again, do what needs to be done, *nulla mora est, adeunt pariter* (*met.* 1. 369).

Characterization of Lot's Wife

Of course, the similarity between the Deucalion/Pyrrha story and Lot can only be taken so far, as Pyrrha survives. However, the *DS* poet makes it clear that Lot's wife could have survived as well if she had not wavered.¹⁴ Before looking at the *DS* text, here is the verse in Gen. 19. 26:

respiensque uxor eius post se versa est in statuam salis.

'His wife was turned into a statue of salt as she looked behind herself.'

One short verse reports what happened to Lot's wife, with no details concerning her transformation. Nor is there any suggestion about what might have caused her to look back, or what subsequently happened to her new salty form. The *DS* poet is less brief (vv. 115-126):

namque comes coniunx. heu me male tum quoque legis
femina non patiens divinae ad murmura caeli
audaces oculos nequiquam sola retorsit
non habitura loqui quod viderit et simul illic
in fragilem mutata salem stetit ipsa sepulchrum
ipsa et imago sibi formam sine corpore servans
durat enim adhuc nuda statione sub aethra
nec pluviis dilapsa situ nec diruta ventis
quin etiam si quis mutilaverit advena formam
protinus ex sese suggestu vulnera complet
dicitur et vivens alio iam corpore sexus
munificos solito dispungere sanguine menses

¹⁴ For a survey of the 'looking back' motif in Classical and Christian literature, see Bremmer 2004. Exegesis that makes use of the transformation of Lot's wife usually associated her mistake with the passage from Luc. 9. 61-62: *Et ait alter sequar te Domine sed primum permittite mihi renuntiare his qui domi sunt. Ait ad illum Iesus, 'Nemo mittens manum suam in aratrum et aspiciens retro aptus est regno Dei.'* For the exegesis, see, for example: Or. *hom. Gen.* 5. 2, Aug. *civ.* x. 8, Hier. *in psalm.* 15.

'For indeed Lot's companion, his wife, sad to say, not submitting then even to divine law, on her own and to no avail turned her bold eyes to the sky's rumblings, not having the ability to say what she saw. And at once in that spot she, her very own tomb, stood, transformed into brittle salt. And she was her own image too,¹⁵ preserving her form without a body. For she to this day endures in her bare station under the heavens, neither dissolving in her place from rains nor falling over from winds. Moreover, if any stranger mutilates her form, she fills her wounds out of her own supply. She, still alive, now with another body, is said to discharge the monthly duties of her sex with the customary blood.'

The passage does not contain the more elaborate and detailed process of transformation found in many of Ovid's metamorphoses, as Hexter pointed out,¹⁶ but the poet does expand the biblical text and it is worth examining his choices.

At the start of the passage above, the *DS* poet both compares Lot's wife with and separates her from the character of Pyrrha. In the *Metamorphoses*, Deucalion addresses his wife for the first time by calling her *o soror, o coniunx, o femina sola* (*met.* 1. 351). Compare this address with the *DS* poet's own: *comes, coniunx ... femina ... sola* (vv. 115-117). The list is similar but diverges from the Ovidian version to highlight the ultimate difference in the fates of the two women.¹⁷ Pyrrha even has her moment of hesitation, unsure about throwing her mother's bones over her shoulder (*met.* 1. 385 *Pyrrha prior iussisque deae parere recusat*), but she eventually follows the cryptic instructions interpreted by her husband (*met.* 1. 397 *sed quid temptare nocebit?*). Lot's wife is clearly different from Pyrrha and the poet continues to compare her, instead, with another Ovidian character.

The act of looking back alone recalls Orpheus' tragic mistake,¹⁸ but Lot's wife is most similar to Niobe, whose transformation is recounted in *met.* VI. 303-312:

¹⁵ *Imago* with its many shades of meaning, including 'ghost' and 'deathmask'.

¹⁶ Hexter 1988, p. 15.

¹⁷ The poet also replaces *soror* with *comes*, wishing to remove any hint of incest from this narrative, further demonstrated by the fact that the poem stops before Lot's daughters seduce him.

¹⁸ *Met.* x. 55-57: *avidusque videndi / flexit amans oculos, et protinus illa relapsa est.*

deriguitque malis; nullos movet aura capillos,
 in vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina maestis
 stant inmoti genis, nihil est in imagine vivum.
 ipsa quoque interius cum duro lingua palato
 congelat, et venae desistunt posse moveri;
 nec flecti cervix nec brachia reddere motus
 nec pes ire potest; intra quoque viscera saxum est.
 flet tamen et validi circumdata turbine venti
 in patriam rapta est: ibi fixa cacumine montis
 liquitur, et lacrimas etiam nunc marmora manant.

‘and she stiffened in grief.
 No wind stirs her hair, her face is bloodless,
 Her eyes stand motionless in her sad face.
 There is nothing alive at all to be seen.
 The tongue in her mouth cleaves to her palate,
 Her veins no longer pulse, her neck won’t bend,
 Her arms cannot move, her feet cannot go.
 All of the organs inside her are stone.
 But she still weeps. And a great whirlwind
 Takes her away to her own native land,
 Where still she weeps, set on top of a mountain,
 And even today tears flow down the marble.’¹⁹

After the queen of Thebes suffered the loss of her seven sons, the narrator remarks, *heu! quantum haec Niobe Niobe distabat ab illa* (*met.* VI. 273). In spite of their flaws, both women are, in part, sympathetic. In addition, Lot’s wife turned her *audaces oculos* behind her. Her *audacia* contributed to her downfall, similar to Niobe, who *malo est audax* (*met.* VI. 288).²⁰ As much as Niobe can feel her tongue hardening, Lot’s wife, too, finds herself unable to speak. This detail does not appear in *Genesis* nor in the other poets, but is, of course, a familiar and often initial process for Ovid’s metamorphosed.²¹ Both women are mothers, frozen ultimately as a result of their daring, becoming *imagines*, mere ghosts of their former selves. For Niobe, *nihil est in imagine*

¹⁹ Lombardo 2010, p. 157.

²⁰ *Audax* or *audacia* occurs only 10 times in the *Metamorphoses* and when a female character is described as *audax*, she is engaging in something illicit: e.g. Thisbe’s daring to meeting Pyramus (*met.* IV. 96), Niobe (*met.* VI. 288), Scylla’s decision to cut her father’s hair (*met.* VIII. 82), and Byblis writing a letter confessing her love to her brother (*met.* IX. 527).

²¹ See e.g. Lycaon, *frustra loqui conatur* (*met.* I. 233).

vivum (*met.* VI. 305); Lot's wife is *ipsa et imago* (v. 120). Also similar is the physical cause of their transformation. Unlike Daphne whose metamorphosis occurs through another's intervention, the agent of Niobe's change remains unexpressed; so, too, Lot's wife. She is changed and there is no who or why to explain it. The fact that the *DS* poet does not judge her or offer a polemical explanation for her punishment continues the ambiguous language describing Niobe's change where she *deriguitque malis* (*met.* VI. 303).²² Furthermore, although Niobe has become stone, she still weeps; in a similar, but more graphic way, Lot's wife as a statue of salt does the same.

The menstruating statue is not included in *Genesis* or in any other poetic version of this narrative and needs explanation.²³ Hexter cited a fifth century itinerary that noted the moon's effect on Lot's wife-as-statue, although saying nothing about menstruation. Hexter also mentioned the connection made by ancient authors of Lot's wife as a second Eve.²⁴ There is, still, another possibility. Niobe cries because there is continuity between her former and current state – her sorrow is unaffected by her physical transformation;²⁵ even though Lot's wife, in her new form, functions biologically, gone is any trace of her per-

²² The *malis* remain to some degree open for interpretation. For a compelling reading of the Niobe story in connection with imperial imagery, see Feldherr 2010, especially pp. 293–312. Prudentius, for example, is far less kind to Lot's wife, saying that she deserved her punishment for being a sinner, a *peccatrix femina* (*ham.* 754). Compare Irenaeus' sympathetic reading of Lot's wife, likening the pillar of salt to the Church, or, the salt of the earth in *adv. haer.* IV. 31. 3: *Et cum haec fierent, uxor remanserat in Sodomis, iam non caro corruptibilis sed statua salis semper manens et per naturalia ea quae sunt consuetudinis hominis ostendens, quoniam et Ecclesia, quae est sal terrae, subrelicta est in confinio terrae, patiens quae sunt humana; et dum semper auferuntur ab ea membra integra, perseverat statua salis, quod est firmamentum fidei, firmans et praemittens filios ad Patrem ipsorum.*

²³ Excellent work has been done on statues as portents and prodigies. Corbeill 2009 specifically addresses the phenomenon of weeping statues of the gods as indicators of a disturbance in the *pax deorum*. For more on divine statues and their agency, see Bremmer 2013 and Casas 2014.

²⁴ Theodosius, *De sit.* 20 (CSEL 39, 1898): *Ibi est uxor Loth, quae facta est statua salis, et quomodo crescit luna, crescit et ipsa, et quomodo minuitur luna, diminuit et ipsa.* Hexter 1988, p. 23, n. 67, said that 'menstruation was "the curse of Eve."' Through her disobedience, Lot's wife earned this curse, too – explicit in lines 115–116.

²⁵ For the relationship between grief, motherhood, and metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*, see Gentilcore 2010 and McAuley 2012, especially pp. 151–157.

sonality, memory, and experiences – each of which is afforded to many of Ovid’s characters post-metamorphosis. And that is precisely the point. That salt, a symbol of infertility, can menstruate suggests what was wrong with Sodom according to the *DS* poet: unnatural activities took place from which nothing fruitful would come,²⁶ for, as Lot himself tried to argue, every creature needs heterosexual parents to continue as a species (v. 42-50).²⁷ That was not going to happen in Sodom; the pillar reminds us of this by performing its monthly duties to no purpose.

Reversing the Process

As seen from the character studies of Lot and his wife, the poet uses the *Metamorphoses* as a blueprint, but not just for narrative similarity. At the conclusion of Lot’s wife’s transformation, instead of forms changed into new bodies (*met.* I. 1-2 *in nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora*), Lot’s wife, after her transformation, preserves her form without a body, *formam sine corpore servans* (v. 120). Spahlinger made the convincing observation that Ovid uses the terms *corpus* and *forma* with discrimination, where the former concerns the physical body and *forma* is the outward appearance that defines a person.²⁸ The *DS* poet is also aware of the distinction. With this specific vocabulary, the *DS* poet reverses part of the process that takes place in Ovidian metamorphoses. There is no new body into which Lot’s wife’s form is changed.

In addition to calling attention to Ovidian vocabulary, the *DS* poet takes the process of transformation one step further in the opposite direction. Blood disappearing is often one of the first signs of transformation for Ovid’s characters. Even Niobe preserves her features, as *in vultu color est sine sanguine*

²⁶ The statue of salt is, in part, an etiological explanation, very Ovidian, for the Dead Sea and its barrenness. After all, *omnis locus, in quo reperitur sal, sterilis est, nihilque gignit* (Plin. *nat.* xxxi. 7). Petits-Pavlovski 1992 also observes the irony of a menstruating female, whether human or statue, in the vicinity of Sodom.

²⁷ Compare his arguments with Iphis’ struggle to justify her love for Ianthe (*met.* IX. 731-735 *nec vaccam vaccae, nec equas amor urit equarum: / urit oves aries, sequitur sua femina cervum. / sic et aves coeunt, interque animalia cuncta / femina femineo correpta cupidine nulla est. / vellem nulla forem*).

²⁸ Spahlinger 1996, pp. 28-29.

(*met.* vi. 304).²⁹ In the world of the *Metamorphoses*, blood can also lead to new life: *Gorgonei capitis guttae cecidere cruentae; / quas humus exceptas varios animavit in angues* (*met.* iv. 618-619). Not so for the statue of salt standing at the border between Sodom and beyond; it can neither have life nor give it, even if it still seems to be alive, *et vivens* (v. 125).³⁰

Conclusion

The poem's narrative loosely follows the *Metamorphoses* from the beginning. Rules of hospitality are broken; God loses patience with humanity; there is destruction on land; the Phaethon episode concludes with a conflagration. With this sort of skeletal similarity, the differences between Ovid's world and that of our poet are thrown into relief. Characters that are transformed in Ovid often preserve elements of what made them *them*. This may be true of Lot's wife, but the inference is bleak. She is not just a counterexample to Niobe because of her condition. Let us recall the woman with the issue of blood as told in Marc. 5. 25-34. She had been bleeding for twelve years until her faith in Jesus finally healed her. Lot's wife, instead, became solely an issue of blood because of her lack of faith.³¹

Whatever her reasons might have been for looking back, her transformation reveals in the most literal way what she was: a menstruating vessel. But even then, her ability to menstruate is secondary to the generative powers of Lot. He was, after all, a tree able to bear his own fruit. The fact that Lot alone is the important life-giving hero of the story would have resonated with any Christian audience. Lot is still able to continue his family line without a maternal counterpart,³² challenging the

²⁹ Loss of blood also marked the transformations of Coronis and Aglauros, for example (*met.* ii. 610-611 and ii. 824).

³⁰ The same lesson is echoed in the surrounding area. One may see an apple in the ashes, but it will crumble upon contact.

³¹ For exegesis of this passage in Mark, see D'Angelo 1999; Marcus 2000, especially pp. 354-373; Collins 2007, especially pp. 276-283; Moss 2010.

³² In the conclusion of his story in *Genesis*, Lot's daughters seduce him in order to further their family line (Gen. 19. 31-38). The exclusion of this story reflects a trend in exegetic tradition to apologize for Lot's incest. See Shanzer 2014.

Ovidian norm that the earth, a maternal force, can give birth without a paternal counterpart.³³

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³³ As in the Deucalion and Pyrrha narrative (*met.* I. 395-402). Compare also the description of life on earth during the Golden Age: '*ipsa quoque immunis rastrisque intacta nec ullis / saucia vomeribus per se dabat omnia tellus*' (*met.* I. 101-102).

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Abstract

De Sodoma retells the story of Lot, his wife, and the destruction of Sodom. The poet of the *De Sodoma* focuses on drawing a fuller picture of Lot and his wife, devoting 50% of his 167 line poem to their characterization. This paper argues that they are individually juxtaposed with characters from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in order to justify the survival of one and the transformation of the other. Lot resembles Lycaon until he proves himself a better host; Lot's wife, in turn, is like Niobe, but loses much more than her form after she becomes a statue. The poet uses Ovid as a blueprint but goes one step further to show the role that faith plays when metamorphosis is possible.

FROM THE LATE ROMAN EMPIRE
TO THE BARBARIAN KINGDOMS

LATE ANTIQUE METAMORPHOSES:
AUSONIUS' *MOSELLA*
AND FULGENTIUS' *MYTHOLOGIES*
AS OVIDIAN REVISITATIONS

Quid stolidi ad speciem notae nouitatis hebetis?
an uos Nasonis carmina non legitis?

'Fools, why so amazed to see a thing strange yet not unknown?
Or do ye not read Naso's verse?'

These few words constitute the only passage of Ausonius' works in which Ovid's name is explicitly mentioned.¹ They are part of an odd poem (Auson. *epigr.* 72. 7-8) describing the sudden sex-change of a peacock, a subject matter immediately reminiscent of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.² The poem itself – particularly its second half (ll. 6-16) – is a playful and ironic appropriation of Ovidian materials³ put into the mouth of a little girl who, after drawing a series of literary parallels of this sexual transformation, ends up revealing that she – or rather he – has also undergone a similar mutation. As apparent from the text here quoted, Ausonius could not conceive of any contemporary reader

* This research was carried out within the Project 'El fin del logocentrismo: fundamentos filosóficos y culturales de la literatura mística judía, cristiana y neoplatónica (s. III-VI d.C.)', funded by the BBVA Foundation Programme 'Ayuda Fundación BBVA a Investigadores y Creadores Culturales 2016'.

¹ For the texts of Ausonius I shall follow Green's 1991 edition. Ovid and Ausonius translations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from Miller 1966-1968 and Evelyn White 1919-1921 respectively.

² On Ovid's influence on Ausonius' erotic and mythological epigrams (including the one here mentioned) see Mattiacci's chapter in this volume.

³ l. 9 (about Caenis) echoes Ov. *met.* xii. 189-209; l. 10 (about Tiresias) *met.* iii. 323-331; l. 11 (about Hermaphroditus) *met.* iv. 285-388 (see esp. *Hermaphroditus* in l. 383 and *semiuir* in l. 386).

who was not acquainted with Ovid's works, which are known to have been fully integrated into that time's school curriculum.⁴ Being an experienced *rhetor* and *grammaticus*, Ausonius himself would have contributed in no small measure to their study and diffusion.

Despite Ovid's undeniable momentousness in the shaping of Ausonius' poetics, his presence has tended to be somehow underrated. According to Green 1991, p. xx, Ovid's echoes in Ausonius' writings, 'though not infrequent, are generally unobtrusive'. Nevertheless, any sensitive reader of the *Moselle* would immediately detect an undisguised 'Ovidian flavour' going far beyond the actual number of intertexts and allusions within the text, which, though not scarce, are by no means dominant in comparison with those of Virgil or Statius.⁵ Why is this so? Scafoglio is one of the few scholars who have attempted to provide an explanation to this riddle. He suggests that Virgil, Statius and Ovid exerted three different types of influence in the forging of the *Moselle*, which was thus the result of a three-tier confluence: of Virgil as the 'evoked model', of Statius as the 'emulated model' and of Ovid the 'aesthetic model'.⁶ The relevance of Ovid's role in this peculiar cubic equation is vindicated by Scafoglio (2013-2014, p. 93) in the following terms:

D'altro canto, a mio avviso, Ovidio è l'*auctor* più importante dopo Virgilio e Stazio: la sua influenza, che supera di gran lunga la sua concreta presenza intertestuale (già non trascurabile di per sé), si rispecchia nell'impostazione impressionistica e nella tendenza illusionistica di scene e immagini, nel gusto 'spettacolare' del movimento e del colore, nella suggestione di forme cangianti e tinte trascoloranti, nella compenetrazione di realtà e finzione, infine nella concezione superficiale e decorativa della religione. Il poemetto assume quindi il suo profilo peculiare nel crocevia fra tre paradigmi letterari, diversamente operanti.

⁴ Wolff – Dain 2013, p. 23: 'On sait qu'à partir du IV^e siècle le canon scolaire s'est élargi à des poètes post-virgiliens, Ovide, Lucain, Stace, Juvénal'.

⁵ Something similar might be said about Ausonius' *Cupido cruciatus*, as suggested by Consolino in this volume.

⁶ Scafoglio 2013-2014, p. 93.

This would explain why all the studies so far conducted on the *intertextual* presence of Ovid in Ausonius' *Mosella* – including that of Scafoglio himself (2000) –, though interesting and intrinsically valuable, are ultimately disappointing, since the relative scarcity and scatteredness of the materials to be considered cannot account for the real Ovidian dimension underlying the poem in its entirety. This paper will try to show that the *Metamorphoses* was not only an occasional source of intriguing intertexts or the poem's dominant 'aesthetic model', but also its ubiquitous and consistent point of reference – in Genette's terms, its *hypotext*.⁷ As we shall see, there is a continuous *hypertextual* tension agonistically opposing two different but intimately interconnected literary and philosophical paradigms, something that could well be defined as an 'anxiety of influence'⁸ toward both the literary 'format' of the *Metamorphoses* and the discourse implicit in this format. The next pages will attempt to elucidate to what extent Ausonius' *Mosella* (fourth century) and later Fulgentius' *Mythologies* (last quarter of the fifth century) should be understood and interpreted as polemical rewritings/updatings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, that is to say, as the *Metamorphoses Revisited* of the late antique world.

⁷ As Genette 1997, p. 5 explains, 'hypertextuality refers to any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary'. Virgil's *Aeneid* and James Joyce's *Ulysses* are, for instance, two different hypertexts of one and the same hypotext: Homer's *Odyssey*. Hypertexts derive from hypotexts through a process which Genette calls 'transformation', whereby text B 'evokes' (more or less vaguely) text A without necessarily mentioning it, quoting it or speaking about it. Thus, a hypertext could not exist as such without its underlying hypotext, even if it may never refer to it. Intertextuality, on the contrary, requires some degree on verbal coincidence and entails a more specific relationship between two particular passages. Hypertextual transformation may be simple (transformation *tout court*) or indirect (which Genette labels 'imitation') and have either a *playful*, a *satirical* or a *serious* mood. Combining both classifications, Genette yields a grid of six possible hypertextual modalities: *playful transformation* (parody), *satirical transformation* (travesty), *serious transformation* (transposition), *playful imitation* (pastiche), *satirical imitation* (caricature), and *serious imitation* (forgery). Of course, these modalities often appear as mixed and impure, thus giving birth to a plethora of possible variations.

⁸ On the notion of 'anxiety of influence' see Bloom 1975.

Ausonius' Metamorphoses

The *Moselle*, like Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, is basically a poem about transformation. The very image of the river, pregnant with Heraclitean and mythological connotations, perfectly embodies the ideas of change, transience and mutability.⁹ The Ovidian inspiration of the piece becomes apparent from its very first word (*transieram* 'I had crossed over'), which, as I have suggested elsewhere,¹⁰ reveals its ultimate subject matter – namely, the narrator's *transition* from darkness to light by means of a process of internal (almost intimate) transformation:

Transieram celerem nebuloso flumine Nauam,
addita miratus ueteri noua moenia Vingo,
aequauit Latias ubi quondam Gallia Cannas
infletaque iacent inopes super arua cateruae.
5 Vnde iter *ingrediens* nemorosa per auia solum
...

'I had crossed over swift-flowing Nava's cloudy stream, and gazed with awe upon the ramparts lately thrown round ancient Vincum, where Gaul once matched the Roman rout at Cannae, and where her slaughtered hordes lay scattered over the countryside untended and unwept. Thence onward *I began a lonely journey* through pathless forest ...'

Scholars have been frequently puzzled by this unusual opening, headed by the unexpected pluperfect *transieram*. Meaningfully, the only previous occurrence of this form in the whole of Latin poetry is to be found in the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Ov. 1. 216-219), also in the context of a first-person narrative of a journey.

⁹ The river as a metaphor for mutability and impermanence figures largely and almost programmatically in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This is particularly so in *met.* xv. 178-184 (Pythagoras' speech): *Cuncta fluunt omnisque uagans formatur imago. / Ipsa quoque assiduo labuntur tempora motu, / non secus ac flumen; neque enim consistere flumen / nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur unda / urgeturque eadem ueniens urgetque priorem, / tempora sic fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur / et noua sunt semper* ('All things are in a state of flux, and everything is brought into being with a changing nature. Time itself flows on in constant motion, just like a river. For neither the river nor the swift hour can stop its course; but as wave is pushed on by wave, and as each wave as it comes is both pressed on and itself presses the wave in front, so time both flees and follows and is ever new').

¹⁰ Hernández Lobato 2016, pp. 232-233.

The intertextual link with this passage is further confirmed by the presence of *ingredior* three lines later (corresponding to Ausonius' *ingrediens* in l. 5):

Maenala *transieram* latebris horrenda ferarum
et cum Cyllene gelidi pineta Lycae;
Arcadis hic sedes et inhospita tecta tyranni
ingredior, traherent cum sera crepuscula noctem.

'*I had crossed* Maenala, bristling with the lairs of beasts, Cyllene, and the pine-groves of chill Lycaeus. Thence *I approached* the seat and inhospitable abode of the Arcadian king, just as the late evening shades were ushering in the night.'

Ausonius did not only want to underline and expand the themes of transformation and travel inherent in the semantics of the verb *transieram*¹¹ by intertextually referring his readers to the poem on transformations par excellence (Ovid's *Metamorphosis*). This calculated opening is also attempting to engage in a true conceptual dialogue with its source passage, which tells us the story of the wicked Lycaon, whose atrocities kindled the wrath of Jupiter and ultimately brought about a collective punishment for all humankind: the deluge. This narrative, meaningfully situated at the very beginning of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (l. 163-252),¹² is sometimes reckoned to be the last of the work's four incipits, successively covering the areas of philosophical (l. 1-88), Hesiodic (l. 89-150), mythological (l. 151-162) and heroic epic (l. 163-252).¹³ That makes it particularly suitable for being intertextually evoked precisely at the opening of Ausonius' poem.

¹¹ Among the meanings of the verb *trans-ire* given *sub voce* by the Oxford Latin Dictionary are: 'to come or go across from one place to another, cross over', 'to move on (from one condition or status to another)' and 'to change one's nature, appearance, etc. (from one thing to another), be transformed.'

¹² Strictly speaking, Lycaon's story does not begin as such until l. 209, since it is related in flashback.

¹³ See Fernández Corte – Cantó Llorca 2008, pp. 237-238 n. 37: 'En el reducido espacio de unos ciento setenta versos el texto ha pasado por la épica filosófica, la épica hesiódica y la épica mitológica a pequeña escala para presentarnos ahora un elemento propio de la épica heroica. El desarrollo del tema es también un recorrido por los subgéneros literarios del *epos*, que tienen en común el verso hexámetro. Es como si Ovidio hubiera hecho tantos comienzos como variantes presenta el género épico'.

It is in fact the very first metamorphosis undergone by a living creature to be related by Ovid. The story in question is narrated by Jupiter while explaining the assembly of gods the unpleasant experiences that had led him to decide to wipe humankind from the face of the earth by means of a purifying deluge. He relates in flashback (hence the pluperfect *transieram*) his travel down to the earth in a human's disguise, aiming to check for himself the increasing wickedness of men. This incognito journey of Jupiter, just like Ausonius' overland travel from Bingen on the Rhine to Neumagen on the Moselle (Auson. *Mos.* 1-9), is consistently characterized with somber brushstrokes: *latebris horrenda ferarum* (l. 216), *gelidi* (l. 217), *inhospita tecta tyranni* (l. 218), *sera crepuscula* (l. 219), *noctem* (l. 219).¹⁴ In fact, what Ovid's scene is describing is a descent from the heavenly Olympus to the hell earth has become as a result of men's depravity. Quite similarly, the beginning of the *Moselle* has been convincingly proved to be a deliberate reworking of the topic of the travel to Hell or *katabasis* as depicted by Virgil in the sixth book of his *Aeneid*.¹⁵ Thus, Ausonius' incipit has been able to bring together Ovid and Virgil in the depiction of a travel through darkness and sin, in which water, conceived as a purifying element, plays a key role – it is only the sight of a river (either the Moselle or the Lethe)¹⁶ that finally clears the darkness which surrounded Ausonius and Aeneas during their respective walks through an infernal landscape; it is only a deluge that can purge Lycaon's crimes and make possible a new beginning to humankind. Significantly, just a few lines before our intertext (Ov. *met.* l. 188-189) Jupiter had sworn

¹⁴ Cf. Auson. *Mos.* 1-9: *nebuloso* (l. 1), *moenia* (l. 2), *infletae* (l. 4), *iacent* (l. 4), *inopes* (l. 4), *cateruae* (l. 4), *iter ... solum* (l. 5), *nemorosa per auia* (l. 5), *nulla humani ... uestigia cultus* (l. 6), *arentem* (l. 7), *sitientibus* (l. 7), *Sauromatum ... colonis* (l. 9).

¹⁵ See Görler 1969, pp. 95-98 and Hernández Lobato 2016, pp. 232-237. Cf. et Martin 1985: p. 252: 'L'exorde du poème pourrait se lire comme le récit d'une cérémonie initiatique consistant, selon la tradition que rappelle Apulée au livre XI des *Métamorphoses*, en une plongée au royaume des morts suivie d'un retour à la lumière et pour ainsi dire une résurrection: Ausone apparaît ici comme un myste qui, à l'issue de cette catabase agonissante mais illuminante, reçoit la révélation de la Verité, qui jusque-là lui était demeurée cachée'.

¹⁶ On the implicit identification between the Moselle and the Lethe and its implications for the poem's exegesis see Hernández Lobato 2016, p. 236 and p. 255.

by the Underworld Rivers that he would carry out his watery revenge: *per flumina iuro / infera, sub terras Stygio labentia luco* ('by the infernal streams that glide beneath the earth through Stygian groves, I swear that ...'). Thus, the ubiquitous presence of water and its symbolic role within the construction of the narrative further unites the three texts by reinforcing the conceptual links between them.

The imagery of an initiation journey through Hades pervading the whole opening of the *Moselle* keeps on combining the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid* (its main intertext) with occasional but very significant reminiscences of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. A good example is provided by lines 14-15, at the very heart of a passage (ll. 10-22) which enacts a second and more luminous stage in Ausonius' initiation travel through the darkness of barbarian territories into the blinding light of the river Moselle. The passage as a whole is intertextually modelled on Aeneas' arrival to the Elysian Fields (*Aen.* vi. 640-641), but lines 14-15 (... *per mutua uincula ramis / ... caligine* ...), as already noticed by Görler (1969: 101), are clearly redolent of Ov. *met.* x. 53-54 (... *per muta silentia trames, / ... caligine* ...), narrating Orpheus' ascent from Hades. Once again, both intertexts point in the same direction: light at the end of the tunnel, a way out from the gloomy depths of Hades.

According to my reading of the poem (Hernández Lobato 2016), the third and final stage of this initiation travel through darkness and sin is the sudden epiphany of the river Moselle (ll. 23-81), which bestows upon the bewildered initiate (Ausonius) an amplified vision and a deeper understanding of reality. It is worth remarking that this epiphany provides a perfect conceptual parallel to that of Jupiter in Ov. *met.* i. 220-221 (the line immediately following the Ovidian intertext evoked in Auson. *Mos.* 1-5), who reveals his so far disguised divine nature upon his arrival at Lycaon's court: *Signa dedi uenisse deum uulguisque precari / coeperat* ('I gave a sign that a god had come, and the common folk began to worship me'). The key passage in the depiction of the epistemological revelation brought about by the unmediated contemplation of the river Moselle is that of *Mos.* 23-81, most particularly ll. 55-74 (dominated by the metaphor of transparency). This text, characterized by a marked Neo-Platonic

flavour, is almost an *unicum* in Latin literature – it lacks clear intertextual borrowings¹⁷ and is one of the most original, iconic and imitated passages of Ausonius' production.¹⁸ Meaningfully enough, the only literary referent with which it seems to strike up a spirited conversation is a brief passage from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (v. 587-589). This passage, however, cannot be regarded as a conventional intertext (intertextuality would require a higher degree of coincidence in wording), but rather as the *hypotext* on which the *Moselle* hypertextually lays its very conceptual foundations. Let us see it:

Inuenio sine uertice aquas, sine murmure euntes,
perspicuas ad humum, per quas numerabilis alte
calculus omnis erat, quas tu uix ire putares;

'I came upon a stream flowing without eddy, and without sound, crystal-clear to the bottom, in whose depths you might count every pebble, waters which you would scarcely think to be moving.'

Ausonius' famous description of the river Moselle can be arguably understood as a literarily creative and philosophically far-reaching development of these three lines. In fact, all the river features briefly mentioned by Ovid – many of which are rather unusual – are systematically included and amplified in Ausonius' rendition of the passage: both rivers lack eddies¹⁹ (*Mos.* 26-33), run silently²⁰ (*Mos.* 33-34; see also l. 22), are transparent to the point of making perfectly visible the riverbed²¹ (*Mos.* 55-64),

¹⁷ Green 1991, p. 471 deems this section 'notably original in expression'. For Alvar Ezquerro 1990 (vol. II, p. 77 n. 64), the description of the river's transparency is 'tanto más personal en la medida en que no se pueden señalar paralelos ni evocaciones evidentes de otros autores, al menos con la abundancia de otros pasajes'.

¹⁸ As Green 1991, p. 471 rightly points out, the passage 'made a clear impression on ancient writers, as it has on modern critics: it was imitated by Claudian, describing Lake Pergus (*rapt.* II. 114-117), by Rutilius (II. 13-14: see on l. 63), and perhaps by the author of *AL* 718 (18-19: see on ll. 55, 63)'.
¹⁹ *Ov. met.* v. 587: ... *sine uertice aquas* ...
²⁰ *Ov. met.* v. 587: ... *sine murmure euntes*.

²¹ *Ov. met.* v. 588: *perspicuas ad humum* ... Cf. et *Ov. met.* iv. 297-301: ... *uidet hic stagnum lucentis ad imum / usque solum lymphae; non illic canna palustris / nec steriles uluae nec acuta cuspide iunci; / perspicuus liquor est; stagni tamen ultima uiuo / caespite cinguntur semperque uirentibus herbis* ('Here he saw a pool

act like a magnifying glass which allows spectators to enumerate every single pebble under their surface²² (*Mos.* 65-74) and are almost motionless²³ (*Mos.* 35-44). It is worth noting that all these characteristics (with the only exception of the last one) figure exactly in the same order of appearance than their alleged Ovidian counterparts. Apart from this conspicuous conceptual and structural similitude, there are occasional lexical coincidences reinforcing the hypertextual kinship between both texts: *calculus* (*met.* v. 589 and *Mos.* 67, both at line opening), *nec murmura uenti* (*Mos.* 33, echoing Ovid's *sine murmure euntes*). To sum it up, what this text is really enacting is not an ordinary intertextual wink but a true literary *agon* with its illustrious predecessor. Ausonius' 'anxiety of influence' has led him to challenge Ovid's undisputed mastery in the depiction of the ever-changing, the unseizable and the ethereal. He even surpasses his model by means of a series of unexpected images, audacious metaphors, conceptual tropes and precious similes, which go far beyond his source text. It can thus be said that in this stylistic and conceptual battle Ausonius has managed to be more Ovidian than Ovid himself.

Interestingly enough, Ovid's passage is a first person narrative (hence the form *inuenio* in l. 587) of an intimate – even sexual – encounter between a nymph and a river. Arethusa (that was the nymph's name) is telling Ceres how she was sexually harassed by the liquid hands of river Alpheus while she was bathing naked in its transparent waters, unaware of its divine nature. The text is thus describing a sudden unmediated encounter between a naked woman and a river, an intimate fusion of narrator and narrated going far beyond the realm of words. This fusion will become even more literal when the fleeing nymph is eventually transformed into a well in the island of Ortygia, near Syracuse – despite the distance, her loving pursuer manages to merge his fresh waters into hers, by flowing under the Mediterranean from the Peloponnese to Ortygia without getting mixed up in seawater.

of water crystal clear to the very bottom. No marshy reeds grew there, no unfruitful swamp-grass, nor spiky rushes; it is clear water. But the edges of the pool are bordered with fresh grass, and herbage ever green'.

²² Ov. *met.* v. 588-589: ... *per quas numerabilis alte / calculus omnis erat*. Cf. also Mart. *epigr.* VIII. 68. 8: *calculus in nitida sic numeratur aqua*.

²³ Ov. *met.* v. 589: ... *quas tu uix ire putares*.

It is not strange that this story has aroused all sorts of Neo-Platonic and mystical interpretations such as the one proposed by Fulgentius the Mythographer, which will be dealt with later in this paper. All these latent mystical connotations might have also been present in Ausonius' revisitation of the passage, given the undoubtedly numinous character of his own face-to-face encounter with the river Moselle and the poem's Neo-Platonic subtext.²⁴ Anyway, many of the uncommon features in the Ovidian hypotext do perfectly match the striking peculiarities of Ausonius' corresponding passage – a first person narrative with hymnic overtones²⁵ describing the narrator's quasi mystical unmediated union with a river which hides no secrets²⁶ and whose perfect transparency suddenly enhances the narrator's faculty of vision above all expectations.

The only significant part of Ausonius' numinous description of the river Moselle (ll. 23-81) with no direct precedent in Ov. *met.* v. 587-589 (its underlying hypotext) are lines 45-54. However, a closer look to this short passage leads us to identify a strong *intertextual* link with another section of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (namely Ov. *met.* xi. 231-233), describing the coastal setting of Thetis' encounter with Peleus. The similarities speak for themselves:

Ov. *met.* xi. 231-233:

... summis inductum est aequor *harenis*.
Litus habet *solidum*, quod nec *uestigia* seruet
nec *remoretur* iter nec opertum pendeat *alga*

'The sea spreads smooth over the sandy bottom; the shore is firm, such as leaves no trace of feet, delays no journey, is free from seaweed.'

²⁴ See on this Hernández Lobato 2016, esp. pp. 249-260 (with some parallels from Plotinus). Pythagoreanism has also been proved to play an outstanding role of in Ausonius' poetry, particularly in the *Moselle* (see Dräger 2000). It is not necessary to recall here the broad connections of Pythagoreanism with the revival of Neo-Platonic schools throughout Late Antiquity, and their insistence on the idea of a gradual quasi-mystical illumination. This idea, as suggested by Hernández Lobato 2016, pervades the *Moselle* in its entirety.

²⁵ On the *Mosella* as a hymn see Fontaine 1977: pp. 438-439 and Hernández Lobato 2016, pp. 237-240 (focusing on the idea of a face-to-face encounter with the numinous).

²⁶ Auson. *Mos.* 56: *secreti nihi amnis habens* ... 'a river keeping naught concealed'.

Auson. *Mos.* 53-54:

Hic *solidae* sternunt umentia *litora harenis*,
nec retinent memores uestigia pressa figuras.

‘Here firm sands spread the moist shores, and the foot resting
 on them leaves no recording print behind.’

What we are dealing with in this case is clearly an *intertextual* borrowing. Verbal coincidence is striking and unquestionable: *harenis* vs. *harenae*, both at line ending; *uestigia* vs *uestigia*, at the second half of the following line; *nec re-moretur* vs *nec re-tinent* (with *memores* phonetically evoking Ovid’s *-moretur*), both opening a line; the words *litus/litora* and *solidum/solidae* figuring together in the same line, though in different position. Conceptually, both texts convey the same idea: that the sand on the seashore/river bank is so compact that human feet leave no visible trace on its surface. As if this were not enough, we also find what critics call an ‘external intertextual marker’²⁷ – the word *memores* in Auson. *Mos.* 54. This *memores* admits a double reading: intradiagetically, it is merely an adjective modifying the noun *figuras*; however, as an intertextual pointer, it can be understood as a direct appeal to the reader’s literary memory – *memores* ‘may you remember’ or simply ‘remember’, a second person subjunctive of the verb *memorare* parenthetically addressing the implicit reader, who is thus asked to recall Ovid’s passage. The second major theme in ll. 45-54 (underpinning the notion of the impervious solidity of the Moselle’s banks) is the superiority of nature over human artifice – the stainless smoothness of the river bed (Auson. *Mos.* 45-47 and 53-54) would immediately outshine any beautifully crafted floor made of Phrygian marble (Auson. *Mos.* 48-52).²⁸ It is the triumph of nature over culture.²⁹ It is no accident that the same idea can be found in the lines immediately following our Ovidian intertext, though referring to a natural cave – or was it

²⁷ On the notion of ‘external markers of allusion’ see Wills 1996, pp. 30-31.

²⁸ It is worth noting that the opening of l. 48 (*i nunc, et Phrygiis...*) is almost literally taken from Ov. *her.* 16. 57 (*i nunc et Phrygiae...*), though the context is apparently unrelated.

²⁹ See esp. Auson. *Mos.* 50-51 (*Ast ego despectis quae census opesque dederunt / naturae mirabor opus...* ‘But I, scorning what wealth and riches have bestowed, will marvel at Nature’s handiwork’). On this polemical stance see Newlands 1988.

rather an artificial grotto? – nearby the seashore.³⁰ Ovid, unlike Ausonius, favours the second hypothesis: artifice over nature.³¹

What is the function of this passage at the very heart of Ausonius' initiatic encounter with the river Moselle? The text clearly invites a symbolic and metalinguistic reading in accordance with the global sense of the poem. Indeed, the *Mosella* has been recently proposed to enact two conflicting *epistemes*,³² both of them simultaneously embodied in the ambivalent metaphor of the river: on the one hand, the river represents *transparency* (see the first half of the poem, esp. *Mos.* 23-81), a direct and epiphanic access to reality, granting an enhanced vision free from any linguistic or conceptual mediation; on the other hand, its surface may also act as a *deceiving mirror* (see the second half of the poem, esp. *Mos.* 189-239), triggering a game of false appearances and unreliable reflections, as funny as it is ultimately dangerous.³³ In the transparent realms of the river Moselle everything is immediately (or rather timelessly) present in its sharp individual concreteness. Under such circumstances, language (based on the ideas of absence, mediation, time, generalization, memory and trace) has no place: *nec retinent memores uestigia pressa figuras* 'the foot resting on them [the firm sands] leaves no recording print behind'. That is why nature (i.e. reality as it is, suddenly revealed to the poet in a non-mediated encounter) is emphatically claimed to surpass human artifice³⁴ (i.e. its verbal rendition, always deceiving). In this way, the text makes a sharp contrast with Ovid's stance (as indirectly suggested in *met.* XI. 235-236 and affirmed everywhere throughout the work), which actually represents the paradigm of artifice, simulation, impermanence and deceptive appearances. As Hardie points out, 'recent work on the *Metamorphoses* has focused increasingly on the ways in which

³⁰ Ov. *met.* XI. 235-236: *Est specus in medio, natura factus an arte, / ambiguum, magis arte tamen, quo ...* ('There is a grotto in this grove, whether made by nature or art one may not surely say, but rather by art').

³¹ On the superiority of art over nature as a key feature of Ovid's poetics (including a brief analysis of this passage) see Solodow 1988, pp. 210-214.

³² See Taylor 2009, pp. 181-183 and Hernández Lobato 2016, pp. 249-264.

³³ These two different ways of looking at the river (according to its reflexivity or its transparency) coincide partially with the two mutually inviolable worlds – the 'super- and subaquaneous realms' – proposed by Roberts 1984, pp. 346-353.

³⁴ Newlands 1988.

it may be read as a poem about language and about the power of language to create illusions of presence'.³⁵ The *Moselle*, on the contrary, oscillates between two conflicting poles: the Ovidian paradigm of those language-generated 'illusions of presence' (embodying an *episteme* of reflection) and the Neo-Platonic paradigm of a pure, immediate and non-discursive presence (embodying an *episteme* of transparency in which neither language nor absence are conceivable as such). If, according to today's critical consensus, metalinguistic and epistemological considerations are inherent in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and, therefore, absolutely essential to its understanding, the undisguised presence of such dimension in Ausonius' *Mosella* (as inescapable as it has been traditionally disregarded) can be legitimately considered another Ovidian feature of the poem, particularly taking into consideration that its stance in this respect is polemically – and hypertextually! – modelled on that of the *Metamorphoses*.

The *Moselle* is indeed universally appreciated for its virtuoso depiction of changing states and subtle transitions. That border zone within what is now but immediately fades away – namely, the Heraclitean stream of reality – is undoubtedly a key element of the poem's baroque sensitivity, an element without which it could not be properly understood. The debt to Ovid in this respect is so big and apparent that the *Moselle* could be even described as a late antique revisitation of the *Metamorphoses*. Occasionally even the wording is undisguisedly Ovidian. Thus, for instance, Ausonius's pun *neutrumque et utrumque*, / *qui nec dum salmo, nec iam salar* ('neither and yet both, not yet salmon, no longer trout')³⁶ clearly echoes Ovid's *nec femina dici / nec puer ut possit, neutrumque et utrumque videtur* ('they were no longer two, nor such as to be called, one, woman, and one, man. They seemed neither, and yet both').³⁷ It would be difficult to find a more synthetic and felicitous way to convey the idea of a transitory state. This Ovidian universe of change, absence, simulation and deceptive appearance, as opposed to the paradigm of transparency, direct knowledge and epiphany that we have been dealing with

³⁵ Hardie 2002, p. 227.

³⁶ Auson. *Mos.* 128-129.

³⁷ Ov. *met.* IV. 378-379.

so far, is explored in unmistakably Ovidian terms throughout the second part of the *Moselle*, particularly in lines 189-239 (displaying the symbolic imagery of watery *reflection*). Indeed, the key concept in this part of the poem – *simulamen* ‘imitation, simulation, representation’ – bears an undisguised Ovidian stamp. This rare substantive, figuring prominently at the very heart of Ausonius’ depiction of the deceitful reflections on the river’s ever-changing surface (*Mos.* 228), has been directly borrowed from Ovid (*met.* x. 727), its coiner. These are indeed the only two passages in the whole of Roman literature in which the term appears. Let us consider them briefly:

Ov. *met.* x. 725-727:

725 ...luctus monimenta manebunt
semper, Adoni, mei; repetitaque mortis imago
annua plangoris peraget *simulamina* nostri.

‘My grief, Adonis, will have an enduring monument, and the annual repetition of the image of your death will reenact a *simulacrum* of my mourning.’³⁸

Auson. *Mos.* 227-229:

unda refert alios, simulacra umentia, nautas.
Ipsa suo gaudet *simulamine* nautica pubes,
fallaces fluuio mirata redire figuras.

‘... the wave reflects a watery semblance of sailors to match them [lit.: the wave reflects “other” sailors – a wet *simulacrum*]. The boys themselves delight in their own counterfeits, wondering at the illusive forms which the river gives back.’

In Ovid’s text, dealing with the grief over the death of Adonis, the term *simulamen* is charged with bad connotations – it is associated with the ideas of death and absence and mirrored in the previous line by the eloquent expression *repetitaque mortis imago* (literally, ‘the repeated image of death’). That is precisely the gist of representation: a futile repetition of the very image of death. Symbols are indeed intrinsically tied to death, because they imply the absence of the thing they represent. For Lacan, as for Hegel, ‘the word is the murder of the thing’, since the mediation of lan-

³⁸ This translation is mine.

guage frustrates the possibility of a direct contact (such as the one described by Ausonius in the first part of his poem) with the *re-presented* – and hence ‘absented’ – reality.³⁹ ‘The being of language’, as Lacan puts it elsewhere (1977, p. 263), ‘is the non-being of objects’. This passage of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* ‘refers to some kind of dramatic or ritual evocation of Adonis’ death at the annual Adonia, a summer festival like the Hyacinthia’ (Anderson 1972, p. 534). This funerary ritual symbolizes what language and representation are all about – they are but artificial and highly ritualized compensatory mechanisms exclusively aimed at making appear as present the absent or, in Hardie’s terms (2002, p. 227), at creating ‘illusions of presence’. These deceptive and ever-changing illusions – these *simulamina*, as the poet puts it – are the core of Ovid’s *Weltanschauung* as expressed in his *Metamorphoses*. It is no wonder that Ausonius has decided to dialogue precisely with this passage and specifically with this term, a perfect summary of Ovid’s poetic and epistemological stance. Much in the same way, in Ausonius’ text the term *simulamine* (*Mos.* 228) is iconically ‘reflected’ in the previous line’s *simulacra* (both in identical metrical position), thus evoking the idea that words – as Derrida would put it – are but simulation of simulations, a pure game of masks and appearances (*Mos.* 229: *fallaces ... figuras* ‘illusive forms’) unable to capture the always elusive and ultimately absent reality.⁴⁰

But this game of deceiving reflections, though apparently innocent and pleasant, can be lethal – one risks getting trapped in a world of illusion and appearance, confusing reality and its representation and even drowning in the river’s depths. There is a mythical episode illustrating all these perils which automatically springs to any reader’s mind: the story of Narcissus. As suggested by Fuoco (1993, pp. 352–353) and Taylor (2009, pp. 200–203), the Narcissus myth in its Ovidian rendition (*met.* III. 339–510)

³⁹ Lacan’s formulation is that ‘the symbol manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject the eternalization of his desire’ (Lacan 1977, p. 104).

⁴⁰ Precisely the word *absens* introduces another passage of the poem which is equally full of Ovidian resonances: ... *et tremit absens / pampinus et uitreis uindemia turget in undis* (Auson. *Mos.* 194–195). The phrase *uitreis ... undis* seems to be intertextually evoking Ov. *met.* v. 48: *Edita Limnaee uitreis peperisse sub undis*.

underlies the whole scene of the river reflections and has indeed a prominent role in the conceptual underpinning of this part of the poem. This is particularly true of the simile of the little girl trying to grasp her twin face at the other side of a mirror.⁴¹ Once again, the Ovidian narrative of Narcissus is to be seen rather as a *hypertextual* model than as a prevalent source of intertextual borrowings (which nevertheless occasionally occur).⁴² The Neo-Platonic dimension of this hypotext and its meaning within the poem's conceptual frame have been sufficiently explored elsewhere (Hernández Lobato 2016, pp. 259-264) and cannot be tackled at length in this context.

Curiously enough, the last metamorphosis in Ausonius' poem involves the river Moselle itself. From the beginning, the Moselle had been described as a protean river, combining in a sole entity the qualities of the sea (l. 27: *ut pelagus*), a river (l. 28: *ut fluuius*), a lake (l. 28: *lacus imitate*), a brook (l. 29: *et riuos ... potes aequiperare*) and a fountain (l. 30: *fontes praecellere*). The Moselle is said to embrace reality in its entirety – it is *everything* at the same time (or rather in the timelessness of its eternal present): *omnia solus habes* 'one, thou hast all' (l. 31).⁴³ But at the very end of the poem the Moselle undergoes a further transformation: it becomes the river that runs through Ausonius' much yearned-for hometown (Bordeaux) – the Garonne, which not in vain had been already evoked at the poet's first encounter with the Moselle (ll. 18-22). Mirroring the work's title (*Mosella*) and the curious telestic in its first four lines, whose final letters form the word *MOSÆ*,⁴⁴ the poem's last word is precisely *Garunnae* (l. 483), the result of that ultimate metamorphosis. The Moselle has thus become the poet's

⁴¹ For some brief remarks on this passage based on Lacan's Mirror Stage, see Nugent 1990, p. 34.

⁴² Scafoglio 2000, pp. 188-189, for instance, sees an echo of Ov. *met.* III. 432 (*Credule, quid frustra simulacra fugacia captas?* 'O fondly foolish boy, why vainly seek to clasp a fleeting image?') in the aforementioned passage of Auson. *Mos.* 227-229. This alleged intertextual dialogue focuses once more on the idea of simulation, crucial in Ovid's poetics.

⁴³ Cf. the famous invocation to Isis in Roman Imperial epigraphy (CIL x. 3800): *Una quae est omnia*. The cult to Isis' pantheistic power figures prominently in the last book of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, another highly Platonized revisitation of Ovid's homonymous work, as proved by Krabbe 1989.

⁴⁴ On this telestic see Dräger 1997, p. 32. *Mosella* is, of course, a diminutive form of *Mosa*.

true home, i.e., ‘the new metaphorical homeland of enlightened humankind’.⁴⁵ For the initiand, the Moselle has proven to be the mystical place where the conflicting poles merge, where the illusion of separation fades away, where *coincidentia oppositorum* finally occurs. On the contrary, for the lay Narcissus and the Moselle’s simple sailors, it is rather a mortal trap of deceptive appearances and deluding reflections. Magnifying glass or lethal mirror, Neo-Platonic epiphany or Ovidian simulacrum – it all depends on the attitude of the one who approaches its sacred waters.

Fulgentius’ Metamorphoses

Gorgonas dici uoluerunt tres, quarum prima Stenno, secunda Euriale, tertia Medusa, quarum quia fabulam Lucanus et Ouidius scripserunt poetae grammaticorum scolariis rudimentis admodum celeberrimi, hanc fabulam referre superfluum duximus.

‘Gorgons are said to have been three: the first one Steno, the second one Euryale, the third one Medusa. Since their story has been written down by Lucan and Ovid, poets extremely familiar to all from the elementary lessons of grammar-school teachers, I have thought it would be superfluous to relate it here.’⁴⁶

Approximately one century after the publication of Ausonius’ *Mosella* (c. AD 371)⁴⁷ and almost five after the composition of the *Metamorphoses* (c. AD 8), Ovid’s influence on literature and school was more alive than ever. This passage of Fulgentius’ *Mythologies* (I. 21 = p. 32. 1-7), probably written in the last quarter of the fifth century,⁴⁸ clearly testifies to this. Of course,

⁴⁵ Hernández Lobato 2016, p. 237.

⁴⁶ The works of Fulgentius will be quoted from Helm’s 1898 edition (including page and line number). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

⁴⁷ I take the year 371 as the most widely accepted date of composition of the *Moselle* (Green 1991, p. 456), although the question is still under discussion (see Sivan 1990 and Drinkwater 1999).

⁴⁸ Wolff – Dain 2013, p. 10: ‘Quoi qu’il en soit exactement, on peut admettre que les *Mitologiae* ont été composées en Byzacène ou en Proconsulaire durant le dernier quart du V^e siècle ou le premier du VI^e, et plutôt en Proconsulaire

circumstances had changed dramatically since the days of Ausonius: Fulgentius lived and wrote in an Africa dominated by the Vandals during a period of great political instability and socio-cultural crisis.⁴⁹ His *Mitologiae* (so spelled in most manuscripts) is a three-book compilation of fifty pagan myths allegorically interpreted in the light of the new cultural and religious standard: Christianity.⁵⁰ Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, well-established as a school text since at least the fourth century, is the most likely source – though not the only one – for most of these moralized stories.⁵¹ Occasionally, this debt is explicitly acknowledged, as in the passage opening this section (referring readers to Ov. *met.* iv. 765–803 for further details on the Perseus myth) or in *myth.* II. 7 = p. 47. 9–12 (on Venus' adultery with Mars).⁵² However, generally speaking, Ovid's omnipresent mediation is so taken for granted that his name is rarely mentioned as such. In fact, the arguments of the myths to be discussed are only sketchily outlined, assuming they must be familiar to all in their Ovidian rendition and, therefore, redundant.

But the relationship of Fulgentius' *Mythologies* with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* goes far beyond the indispensable quest for source material or the occasional resolve to strike up an inter-

si l'on associe un auteur raffiné comme Fulgence au centre intellectuel qu'était Carthage'.

⁴⁹ For more on Fulgentius' life, context, works and style, see Manca's (2003, pp. 7–88) and Wolff's (2009, pp. 7–39; Wolff – Dain 2013, pp. 7–41) comprehensive and well-informed introductions. An extensive annotated bibliography on Fulgentius, compiled and updated by Gregory Hays, can be found at <<http://people.virginia.edu/~bgh2n/fulgbib.html#mit>> (checked: 27/10/2017).

⁵⁰ On the *Mythologies* see Wolff and Dain's 2013 bilingual edition, with extensive introduction and notes.

⁵¹ See Hays 2014, p. 135: 'there is a good deal of overlap with the *Metamorphoses*, including the stories of Proserpina (1. 10–11), Daphne (1. 14), Phaethon (1. 16), Mercury and Argus (1. 18), Perseus (1. 21), Tiresias (2. 5), the daughters of Helios (2. 7), Midas (2. 10), Actaeon (3. 3), Myrrha (3. 8), Marsyas (3. 9), Orpheus (3. 10), and Alpheus and Arethusa (3. 12). The ordering of these stories does not follow Ovid's. Yet we can discern an Ovidian trajectory to the work, from an initial book in which the gods are central, to stories involving divine amours and mortal offspring, and finally to stories of unhappy human love, with the gods receding into the background'.

⁵² *Perstant nunc in nostra uita de hac fabula certe admodum testimonia; nam uirtus corrupta libidine sole teste apparet, unde et Ouidius in [quinto] metamorphoseon ait: 'Vidit hic deus omnia primus'.* The quoted text corresponds to Ov. *met.* iv. 172 (with *uidet* instead of *uidit*), on the same subject.

textual dialogue with certain passages of a venerable work.⁵³ In a sense, Fulgentius attempted to *rewrite* the *Metamorphoses* – or rather, to write a sort of *Counter-metamorphoses* – from the perspective of the new faith. Therefore, his *Mythologies* could well be understood as a sui generis Christianization of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, just like his second major work – the *Expositio Virgilianae continentiae* – would do with Virgil's *Aeneid*. Needless to say, both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Aeneid* represent the epitome of the classical school curriculum as conceived and practised in Late Antiquity. In both cases the mechanism of literary appropriation set in motion by Fulgentius is one and the same: systematic allegorization with clear Neo-Platonic overtones. These bold literary proposals are, of course, to be related to that time's controversy on the meaning and value of pagan myths and non-Christian literature. The imitative tension brought about by this underlying conflict is particularly apparent in the work's prologue and epilogue, as we shall see now.

The ironic and highly metaliterary prologue, conceived as a Menippean satire,⁵⁴ is almost a work on its own.⁵⁵ It stages a curious encounter between Fulgentius himself (who had been complaining of the unending barbarian raids, the ruinous taxes and the forced confinement that he had to endure) and the fleeing Muse Calliope. Interestingly, this unusual prosimetrical preface engages in a far-reaching intertextual dialogue with the celebrated incipit of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, aimed at sketching by contrast Fulgentius' own literary stance. As Relihan (1984, pp. 87-88) points out, there are at least two places in this prologue in which the narrator consciously 'reverses the Ovidian manifesto

⁵³ See e.g. Fulg. *myth* II. 7 = p. 47. 4-6 (*ille* [scil. Vulcanus] *adamante catenas effecit ambosque* [scil. Venerem et Martem] *religans diis turpiter iacentes ostendit*, '[Vulcan] made chains of adamant, and binding the two of them [Venus and Mars] displayed them to the gods as they lay there shamefully'). This passage, according to Hays 2014, p. 134, echoes Ovid's *illi iacuere ligati / turpiter*, 'they lay there shamefully bound' (*met.* iv. 186-187). I quote here Hays's translation.

⁵⁴ For a general view of Fulgentius' prologues see Manca 2002. For more on the presence of the literary conventions of Menippean satire in the prologue of Fulgentius' *Mythologies*, see Relihan 1993, pp. 152-163 and Venuti 2013.

⁵⁵ Venuti 2011, p. 51 describes it as a 'sotto-testo indipendente'. For a thorough analysis of this prologue see Venuti 2009.

of *met.* I. 1-4 in the name of a new theory of interpretation which finds myth contemptible'. Let us first recall Ovid's text:

In noua fert animus *mutatas dicere formas*
 corpora; di, coeptis (nam uos mutastis et illa)⁵⁶
 adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen.

'I intend to tell of shapes transformed into new bodies; gods, inspire my undertakings (for you have changed them as well) and bring down from the first beginning of the world to my own time the eternal song.'⁵⁷

The first intertext of the prologue (referring to Ov. *met.* I. 4) corresponds to the final lines of a brief poem in trochaic tetrameters, in which the narrator invokes the Muses in mock-bombastic style: *ad meum uetusta carmen / saecula nuper confluant* 'let the ancient ages flow together in my time for my song' (Fulg. *myth.* I *prol.* p. 8. 4-5). In Relihan's words (1993, p. 154), Fulgentius' song – unlike Ovid's (*met.* I. 4: *ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen*) – 'is not to continue through the ages, but all ages are to meet for a new song; the narrator [i.e. Fulgentius] hopes to summarize and end, not perpetuate, the ancient traditions'. The contrast between both passages, regardless of how it may be described,⁵⁸ is apparent. The second great intertext (referring to Ov. *met.* I. 1), much more significant for our purposes, is part of the narrator's response to the Muse, who had just volunteered to help him, an initiate in the art of poetry,⁵⁹ to master his verbal skills, so that he might become a fully-fledged poet. Fulgentius' answer, crowded

⁵⁶ On the reading *illa* (referring to *coeptis* 'my undertakings') instead of the traditional *illas* (referring to *formas* 'shapes') see Barchiesi – Koch 2005, pp. 138-140. It was first proposed by Kenney 1976.

⁵⁷ This translation is taken from Relihan 1993, p. 154.

⁵⁸ Venturi 2011, opposing Relihan 1984 and 1993, p. 154, denies the alleged 'anti-Ovidianism' of this prologue. Instead, she speaks of 'una sintesi, un ri-uso e un superamento' (Venturi 2011, p. 59) and of a willingness to 'sottoporre il materiale delle *Metamorfosi* a un'opera di ribaltamento "filosofico"'. Anyway, there is no doubt that Fulgentius wishes to contrast his own poetics with that of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, either to go beyond it (Venturi) or to abolish it (Relihan).

⁵⁹ Fulg. *myth.* I *prol.* p. 10. 11-12: *Anacreonticis iam dudum nouus mistes initiatus es sacris* 'you have for some time now been the latest initiate in the Anacreontic mysteries'. This translation is taken from Relihan 1993, p. 207.

with Ovidian echoes,⁶⁰ is categorical and perfectly characterizes his poetical stance: though the title (i.e. *Mythologies*) – and even the superficial content – of his book might invite anyone (including the Muse) to assume that he would be talking about different episodes of Greek mythology,⁶¹ he never had such intentions. Fulgentius would *not* deal with the superficial aspects of those verbal accounts known as myths (*historiae effectus*) but rather, with the inner truth – the unseizable ‘thing’ – which they all conceal (*certos rerum effectus*). Unlike Ovid (who wanted ‘to tell of shapes transformed’, *mutatas dicere formas*), Fulgentius’ only goal is to ‘make clear these transformed vanities’ (*mutatas ... uanitates manifestare cupimus*), not to ‘obscure clear things by transformation’ (*non manifesta mutando fuscamus*):

Tum ego: Index te libelli fefellit, generosa loquacitas; non mihi cornutus adulter arripitur nec imbre mendaci lusa [Danae] uirgo cantatur, dum suo iudicio deus sibi pecudem praetulit et hanc auro decepit quam potestate nequiuit; non ... canimus ... nec in meis libellulis ...; non ... nec ... inquirimus ...; nec referam ... *Mutatas itaque uanitates manifestare cupimus, non manifesta mutando fuscamus*, ut senior deus innitus exerceat et sol fulgoris igne deposito malit anilibus exarari rugis quam radiis; *certos itaque nos rerum praestolamur effectus, quo sepulto mendacis Graeciae fabuloso commento quid mysticum in his sapere debeat cerebrum agnoscamus*.⁶²

‘Then I said: “The title of my book deceives you, your noble garrulosity. I have taken up no horned adulterer, nor sung of a maiden deceived by treacherous rain, while a god through his own judgement preferred a beast to himself and deceived by gold the girl whom he could not gain by force. We do not sing of ... nor in my little chapters ...; nor do we seek after ...

⁶⁰ On these ‘minor’ allusions to Ovid, constituting a genuine ‘rete di rimandi ovidiani’, see Venuti 2011, pp. 53–58 and 60–61.

⁶¹ In this context, Fulgentius enumerates all the myths that he is *not* going to discuss in his work (many of which will be effectively treated to differing degrees in the following pages, thus underlining the paradoxical nature of this enumeration). This paradox clearly suggests that the stories are not to be considered the gist of Fulgentius’ book – it is only the substratum of truth underneath them (i.e., their philosophical and allegorical interpretation) that matters. As shown by Hernández Lobato 2017, pp. 295–304, this negative catalogue is modelled on Sidonius Apollinaris’ programmatic *recusatio* (Sidon. *carm.* 9).

⁶² Fulg. *myth.* 1 *prol.* pp. 10–11. 19–18.

nor after ...; nor will I tell of ... Therefore *I want to make clear these transformed vanities, not to obscure clear things by transformation*, so that an elder god can practice his neighing and the sun can put aside the fire of his brightness and prefer to be furrowed with an old woman's wrinkles instead of his own rays. *And so I aim for the real essence of things, so that once the fanciful invention of deceitful Greece has been buried into silence we can recognize what mystic things our understanding ought to grasp in them.*"⁶³

Thus, Fulgentius' *Mitologiae* is in a sense the 'unexpressed background' of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid stays trapped in the hallow realm of shapes (*formas*), change (*mutatas*), time (*in noua ... corpora*) and representation (*dicere*); Fulgentius, on the contrary, aspires to disclose (*manifestare*) the formless, timeless and changeless essence (the *quid mysticum* and the *certos rerum effectus*) underlying Ovid's changeable shapes. In Ausonian terms, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* represents the ever-changing, alluring but ultimately deceiving reflections on the river's surface (i.e. the world of language, 'illusions of presence' and anecdotal narratives), whereas what Fulgentius is trying to show is the mysterious and immutable riverbed (the *quid mysticum*) underlying the apparent diversity and the noisy incoherence of myths and words (i.e. the realm of silence, essence and mystical encounter). Fulgentius has gone one step beyond Ausonius in his Neo-Platonic revisitation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, an approach to the Augustan poem which proves to be highly characteristic of the emerging late antique *episteme*. Not in vain, Fulgentius is explicitly described as a 'new Plato' at the end of this very prologue (*myth. I prol. p. 15. 1*),⁶⁴ as he undertakes the impossible task of rewriting/ allegorizing/ deconstructing the *Metamorphoses* at the dawn of what he calls

⁶³ I reproduce here Relihan's translation (1993, pp. 207-208) with some minor amendments, highlighted in italics.

⁶⁴ Calliope solemnly promises Fulgentius: 'if you cling to them [scil. Urania and Philosophia, the guardians she had just granted Fulgentius to help him in his rewriting of the *Metamorphoses*] they will, in one fell swoop, make you heavenly, not mortal, and they will place you in the stars, not as they did Nero, with poetic praise, but as Plato, with mystic ideas (... *astrisque te, non ut Neronem poeticis laudibus, sed ut Platonem mysticis interserent rationibus*)'. Translation: Relihan 1993, p. 210.

an ‘age of silence’.⁶⁵ Ovid’s empty verbiage – the world of *simulamina* and ‘illusions of presence’ (Hardie 2002, p. 227) – must be totally buried into silence (*sepulto mendacis Graeciae fabuloso commento*), so that the wordless truth hidden under the farce of representation (*quid mysticum*) can finally emerge. The mirror of words, as Ausonius would put it, must turn into the magnifying glass of silence in order to reveal the invisible and ineffable truth. Thus, both Fulgentius’ *Mitologiae* and Ausonius’ *Mosella* are perfect exponents of what I call ‘the poetics of silence’ (Hernández Lobato 2017), i.e. the literary manifestation of the unprecedented questioning of language and representation which characterized Late Antiquity as a whole. This curious phenomenon, new to the ancient world, underlies many manifestations of late antique culture, such as Plotinus’ philosophy, Augustine’s semiotics, Evagrius Ponticus’ hesychasm, Gregory of Nyssa’s apophatic theology or Pseudo-Dionysius’ negative mysticism.

Curiously enough, some of the methods most characteristically used by Fulgentius to bring to the surface that ‘mystic truth’ concealed by myths are typically Ovidian. That is the case of the resort to creative etymologies, which is directly inherited from the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*.⁶⁶ A good example of this is provided by the book’s epilogue (Fulg. *myth.* III. 12 = p. 80. 1-15), entirely devoted to the story of the river Alpheus (interpreted as ἀληθείας φῶς, ‘the light of truth’) and the fleeing nymph Arethusa (taken to derive from ἀρετή ἴση, wrongly translated as *nobilitas aequitatis* instead of *aequa nobilitas*). Meaningfully, this curious colophon revisits the same episode from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* which had inspired Ausonius’ depiction of the Moselle as a ‘mystic river’ always prone to reveal its innermost depths (thus embodying the paradigm of transparency as opposed to that of deceiving reflection). As usual, the African writer has enhanced the Neo-Platonic aspects of Ausonius’ rendition, thus turning

⁶⁵ Fulg. *Virg. cont.* p. 83. 1-4: *Expētebat quidem, Leuitarum sanctissime, nostri temporis qualitas grande silentium, ut non solum mens expromptare desisset quod didicit, quantum etiam obliuionem sui efficere debuit quia uiuit* (‘The spirit of this epoch of ours, oh most saintly of Levites, required a big silence, such that our mind should not only cease to disclose what it has learnt, but it should also attain to a state of self-forgetfulness, to an oblivion of its very existence’).

⁶⁶ See Ahl 1985 and Porte 1985, pp. 197-264.

this passage into the very epilogue (and banner) of his own literary and philosophical manifesto:

Alfeus fluuius Aretusam nimpham amauit; quam cum sequeretur, in fontem conuersa est. Ille in mediis undis ambulans non inmixtus in sinu eius inmergitur; unde et apud inferos obliuionem animarum trahere dicitur. Alpheus enim Grece quasi aletiasfos, id est ueritatis lux, Arethusa uero quasi areteisa, id est nobilitas aequitatis. Ergo quid amare poterat ueritas nisi aequitatem, quid lux nisi nobilitatem. Ideo et in mari ambulans non miscetur, quia lucida ueritas omni malorum morum salsidine circumdata pollui aliqua commixtione non nouit. Sed tamen in sinu acquissimae potestatis omnis lux ueritatis delabitur; nam et descendens in infernum, id est in secreta conscientiae,⁶⁷ ueritatis lux malarum rerum semper obliuionem inportat.

‘The river Alpheus fell in love with the nymph Arethusa. As he was pursuing her, she turned into a fountain. Alpheus, passing through the sea waves without merging into them, plunged into her bosom; hence he is said to bear oblivion to the souls in the Underworld. For Alpheus is in Greek something like *aletheias phos*, that is, “the light of truth”; while Arethusa is for *arete isa*, that is, “equality of excellence”. For what could truth love but equity, or light, but excellence? If he did not merge into the sea when he passed through it, it was because transparent truth, even when surrounded by all the barren saltiness of evil habits, cannot be polluted by any mingling with them. Yet all the light of truth do sink into the bosom of the most equitable power; for, as it goes down to the Underworld, that is, into the secrets of consciousness, the light of truth always brings about the forgetting of evil things.’

The text creatively combines the attributes of the river Alpheus with those of the Lethe (whose presence in *Aeneid* VI had also determined Ausonius’ symbolic construction of the river Moselle). This surprising confusion can hardly be seen as a mere mistake (particularly if we take into account Fulgentius’ vast culture and the unmatched popularity of the sixth book of the

⁶⁷ I accept the reading *conscientiae* proposed by Wolff – Dain 2013, p. 179 n. 130 instead of Helm’s *conscientia*.

Aeneid);⁶⁸ it is rather an attempt to bring together a series of symbolic elements governing Fulgentius' Neo-Platonic rewriting (or rather 'un-writing') of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: the initiation journey into the innermost depths of oneself (Lethe's Underworld / Alpheus' underwater journey), the ability to remain unpolluted by the surrounding stimuli (like Alpheus' uncontaminated waters or the hesychasts' yearned-for *apatheia*⁶⁹), the indefatigable quest for virtue (personified by Arethusa), and the notion of enlightenment (Alpheus is equated with ἀληθείας φῶς) through oblivion (Lethe). The quasi-apophatic idea of knowledge as a negative process based on self-imposed silencing and forgetting emerges everywhere in Fulgentius' writings⁷⁰ and is of paramount importance for a better understanding of their very *raison d'être*. Words and concepts have to be silenced so that truth may emerge. Fulgentius *Mythologies* is thus an Augustinian invitation to enter into oneself, to plunge into the forgetful depths of non-discursive truth without getting polluted by the literal meaning of words and myths. It is Ovid beyond Ovid.

Conclusion: Late Antique Metamorphoses

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ausonius' *Mosella* and Fulgentius' *Mythologies* are – together with Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (also known as *The Golden Ass*)⁷¹ – the four great capital Ms of Latin literature. All of them provide complementary and time-conditioned reflections on the problems of change and impermanence,

⁶⁸ In fact, this confusion is an *unicum* in ancient literature, as pointed out by Wolff – Dain 2013, p. 178 n. 128.

⁶⁹ Cf. Evagrius Ponticus *Praktikos* 2: 'The kingdom of heaven is impassibility (ἀπάθεια) of the soul accompanied by true knowledge of beings'. Translation by Sinkewicz 2006, p. 97.

⁷⁰ See e.g. the ideas of silence and self-forgetfulness in Fulg. *Virg. cont.* pp. 83, 1-4, quoted in note 65.

⁷¹ On the presence of Ovid in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* see Krabbe 1989 and Harrison 2014. As Krabbe 1989, p. 72 points out, 'for Apuleius, the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid is every bit as important a source as the pseudo-Lucianic *Lucius* or *The Ass*. The result is not a duplicate *Metamorphoses* or an anti-*Metamorphoses*, but an *alter Metamorphoses*. Apuleius has in effect provided another illustration of two of Ovid's primary theses: that all things change and adopt new forms, and that all great literature endures'.

truth and appearance, revelation and concealment, and on the limits of human language to grasp and re-present an always elusive reality. Ovid's pioneering work has been not only quoted and alluded to, but also retold and rewritten under very different shapes by each succeeding generation, in an attempt to provide new answers to all these paramount questions. The works of Apuleius (second century), Ausonius (fourth century) and Fulgentius (fifth to sixth century) are thus to be regarded as the three fundamental landmarks in a centuries-long process of literary revisitation. They are in a sense the *Metamorphoses Redux* of their respective times, hypertextually modelled on this venerable – but equally questionable – classic. Without the hypotext of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* none of these works (its recurring hypertexts) could exist as such. As shown in this paper, this process of critical rewriting entailed a progressive (Neo-)Platonization of the Ovidian masterpiece,⁷² so that it might fit the new epochal anxieties and the crucial cultural changes which ultimately gave birth to Late Antiquity.

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⁷² The literature on the Platonic and allegorical elements in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (particularly in the Cupid and Psyche episode and in the final Isis book) is unending. See for instance Schlam 1970 and 1992 and Fletcher 2014 (esp. pp. 262-293). As Krabbe 1989, pp. 37-38 points out, 'For Ovid, metamorphosis is primarily a paradigm of how things are. Impermanence, change, fluidity are principles of nature. [...] For Apuleius, metamorphosis is a paradigm of conversion. In ancient paganism, conversion often meant a turning to philosophy. As with Plutarch, so with Apuleius philosophy and religion are more or less fused. In the *Metamorphoses* conversion is couched in terms of the transformation of a sinner into an initiate of Isis, a change of moral state which also has philosophical implications'.

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Abstract

This chapter aims to elucidate to what extent Ausonius' *Mosella* (fourth century) and Fulgentius' *Mythologies* (last quarter of the fifth century) should be understood and interpreted as polemical rewritings/updatings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, that is to say, as the *Metamorphoses Revisited* of the late antique world. Ovid's poem is not only to be seen as an occasional source of intertexts or as an aesthetic model, but primarily as the *hypotext* underlying and modelling both works. In fact, there is a continuous *hypertextual* tension

agonistically opposing two different but intimately interconnected literary and philosophical paradigms, an ‘anxiety of influence’ toward both the literary ‘format’ of the *Metamorphoses* and the discourse on change, transience and mutability implicit in this format. This study shows how the process of critical rewriting carried out by Ausonius and Fulgentius entailed a progressive (Neo-)Platonization of the Ovidian masterpiece, so that it might fit the new epochal anxieties of Late Antiquity.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

THE INFLUENCE
OF OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*
IN LATE ANTIQUITY:
PHAETHON AND THE PALACE
OF THE SUN

The works of Ovid find echoes throughout the poetry of Latin late antiquity, though the poet's influence comes a distant second to the all-pervasive presence of Virgil. Among those works the *Metamorphoses* exerts a particularly strong pull, as evidenced by references to the subject matter of the poem and by the use of Ovidian language in the later texts.¹ In its formal and structural properties too, of all the classical epics Ovid's poem comes closest to some of the distinctive qualities of late antique poetics, with its discontinuous narrative structure, frequent catalogues and rhetorically elaborated speeches, and with a tendency to isolate compositional units as frameworks for *variatio* and the elaboration of self-contained patterns of language and thought.² In the present article I will examine how a particular story from the *Metamorphoses*, that of Phaethon, resonates in the literature of the period.

Ovid's account of the events surrounding Phaethon's ill-fated attempt to drive the chariot of the Sun must have been the most familiar version of that myth for the writers of Roman late antiquity. Moreover the manner in which he told the story may well

¹ Döpp 2014, cols 646-647.

² Roberts 1989, pp. 61-62. In the first book of the *Metamorphoses* the account of the four ages (l. 89-150) and, on a smaller scale, the four winds (l. 61-66) exemplify self-contained compositional units, which then can be diversified by the practice of *variatio*. At the level of the sentence, Ovid makes substantial use of the figure of theme and variation (*interpretatio*), whereby, in Lee's words, 'he takes an idea and expresses it in a variety of ways in successive phrases or sentences, drawing out all its implications' (Lee 1953, p. 25). See too Kenney 1973, pp. 132-135.

have added to its appeal. Certain properties of his account that have sometimes attracted criticism from modern readers conform closely to late antique preferences in the handling of narrative. Bömer's commentary draws attention to the relatively limited space Ovid devotes to recounting the sequence of events, by comparison with extensive descriptive passages, speeches, and catalogues (of mountains, rivers, and springs affected by Phaethon's disastrous career).³ Such de-emphasis of the temporal progression of events is a recurrent feature of late Latin narrative poetry. (Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* is a canonical example.) This is not to say that the exemplary force of the Phaethon story for late antique writers depended on the compositional qualities of Ovid's text. But his account will have conformed to expectations for the handling of narrative in verse. In particular the descriptions of the palace, court, and chariot of the Sun seem to have struck a special chord in late antiquity. I will devote the second part of my paper to the reception of those passages.

References to the Phaethon story naturally concentrate on his fiery career and crash.⁴ When these events are read allegorically and a moral drawn from them, it is most often political in nature. Suetonius attributes to the emperor Tiberius the prophecy that Caligula will be the ruin of everyone (*exitio suo omniumque*); that he (Tiberius) is bringing up 'a Phaethon for the whole world' (*Cal. 11 Phaethontem orbi terrarum*). As Degl'Innocenti Pierini points out, this view of Caligula's reign finds an echo in Seneca's *Consolatio ad Polybium* (17. 3).⁵ There too Caligula has been born by nature for the destruction of the human race (*in exitium opprobriumque humani generis*); by his doing 'the empire will be burnt up and totally destroyed' (*imperium adustum atque ever-*

³ Bömer 1969, p. 222, who quotes some negative judgments of the passage, though his own response is more measured. The treatment of the story in book 2 contrasts with the more conventional handling of narrative in the introductory section to the Phaethon story at the end of book 1 (750-779).

⁴ For the purposes of this paper I am excluding consideration of the aftermath of the crash and the mourning of Phaethon's mother, Clymene, his sisters, the Heliades, and his devoted comrade, Cynus. These figures, and especially the Heliades, are frequently subsequently referred to.

⁵ Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990, pp. 251-259. I assume that the attribution of these sentiments to Tiberius is apocryphal and that the words represent a *post eventum* prophecy.

sum funditus). The passage from Seneca goes beyond that from Suetonius in two ways. First it makes explicit the identification of the universe destroyed by Phaethon with the Roman empire (the sense of *imperium* here); and secondly, it casts the reigning emperor Claudius in the Jupiter role, 'the clemency of a most gentle emperor is restoring the empire' (*imperium ... principis mitissimi recreat clementia*).⁶ Claudius' methods, as characterized by Seneca, are certainly very different from Jupiter's violent intervention in the *Metamorphoses*.⁷ But the Seneca passage points up the two possible, but complementary political applications of the Phaethon story, depending on whether the focus is on Phaethon as a force for chaos or Jupiter as a responsible ruler and restorer of order.

One complication with the model of Jupiter as bringer of imperial or cosmic stability is that in Ovid's version he does not work alone. Phoebus/*Sol* is indispensable to the proper order of things. In Lucretius' account Jupiter and the Sun work together: Jupiter's thunderbolt puts an end to Phaethon's flight, while the Sun takes up the torch from Phaethon as he falls, reins in the horses, and sets all things back on their rightful course (vv. 399-404). It's only in Ovid that the relationship becomes inharmonious. The Sun's grief at Phaethon's death – he is the last of a series of figures who mourn the dead charioteer – leads him to complain that he is not properly appreciated and to threaten to withdraw his services. Faced with a threat to his realm – only the Sun can patrol the sky and maintain security and stability – Jupiter has resort to a combination of cajoling and threats, supported by the prayers of other divinities, to persuade the Sun to change his mind and abandon his planned strike. Subsequent references to the story pass over Ovid's subtle delineation of the conflict between paternal affection and power politics among the gods.⁸

⁶ Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990, pp. 255-256, notes that the verb *recreat* is an echo of Lucretius v. 404, where it is Apollo who restores order.

⁷ Perhaps this is why the reference to Phaethon is not explicit in Seneca. Alternatively the comparison with Jupiter's methods might serve to enhance Claudius' credit. (In Lucretius Jupiter acts out of anger [*ira tum percitus acri*, v. 399].) I suppose too a subversive reading might suggest there was more of the Jovian violence to Claudius' methods than Seneca is willing to admit.

⁸ His account may owe something to dynastic politics in Augustan Rome. The Sun's situation shows certain parallels with that of Tiberius. Both serve

Generally only one or the other of the gods is mentioned, though in a couple of cases Jupiter takes the Sun to task for rashly allowing Phaethon to drive his chariot.⁹

Already at the turn of the first century CE in a speech on kingship Dio Chrysostom had employed the figure of Phaethon as a model of the bad ruler (*Or.* 1. 46). The emperor Julian was to use the same comparison in the fourth century (*Or.* 2. 83D). But on the Latin side most later references to Phaethon's career occur in panegyric contexts, where the author seeks to denounce the destructive madness of an enemy and/or to praise the governance of a ruler. So Claudian in his panegyric on the sixth consulate of Honorius has the river god Eridanus in a speech to the Visigothic king Alaric cite Phaethon as a salutary example of the fate that lies in store for rash undertakings like Alaric's invasion of Italy: 'whoever aspires to despoil Rome or to take the reins of the Sun, commits the same mad crime' (*Hon. VI cons.* 191-192).¹⁰ The same poet puts in the mouth of Stilicho a comparison between Rufinus' alleged designs on the destruction of Rome and the threat Phaethon's career posed for the world (*Ruf.* II. 210-211). In emphasizing Phaethon's failure to keep to the proper path (*limite iusto / devius*) or to keep control of the reins (*errantes ... confundat habenas*) Claudian betrays the influence of Ovid.¹¹

In a second consular panegyric, for the fourth consulate of Honorius, Claudian combines the theme of Phaethon-like destruction with a wise ruler's restoration of order (*Hon. IV cons.* 62-69). The ruler in question is Honorius' father Theo-

a supreme ruler in maintaining the frontiers of the empire (or in the Sun's case of the world). Both withdraw their services, feeling unappreciated. Both (after some years in Tiberius' case) cannot ultimately be dispensed with.

⁹ This was the subject of the composition by the eleven-year old poet Q. Sulpicius Maximus, winner of the Greek poetry context in the Capitoline Games (94 CE); the text of his poem is inscribed on his tombstone (CIL VI. 33976). Later Lucian of Samosata included a lighthearted exchange between the two gods on this subject in his *Dialogi Deorum* 24 (25).

¹⁰ *Simili bacchatur crimine, quisquis / adspirat Romae spoliis aut Solis habenis.*

¹¹ For the word *limes* see *met.* II. 130; for the management of reins, *met.* II. 87 and 169. Admittedly the latter language is not especially distinctive. In Claudian *habenae* serves as synecdoche for the chariot. It is striking how often the language of Phaethon's flight lends itself to a reading as political or military metaphor.

dosius, who is represented as rescuing the eastern Roman world from the depredations of the Visigoths. In this case, because Claudian does not identify any individual leader but refers to the Gothic hordes en masse, he emphasizes the role of the team of horses rather than their driver: 'as when, all order broken, the crazed four-horse team carried Phaethon far astray' (*velut ordine rupto / cum procul insanae traherent Phaethonta quadrigae*, vv. 62-63). In this case the influence of Ovid is more pronounced; he speaks of 'a four-horse team' (*quadriiugi*) that 'leaves its well-worn path and runs without the order it previously had' (*met. II. 167-168 tritumque relinquunt [...] spatium nec quo prius ordine currunt*). Order is restored in Claudian's account of the Phaethon myth by the Sun (vv. 65-66); Jupiter does not figure. As a 'better master' (*meliore magistro*, v. 67) the Sun restores 'the fabric and harmony of the heavens' (*machina concentusque poli*, v. 68) and 'the chariot is subjected to authority and a limit on its flames' (*currusque recepit / imperium flammaeque modum*, vv. 68-69). Although ostensibly describing the Sun's actions, the language evidently is chosen at least in part with an eye to the human ruler, Theodosius.¹² By attributing restoration of order to the Sun rather than Jupiter Claudian avoids describing the violent deployment of Jupiter's thunderbolt, which would not conform to the more benign image of Theodosius he was seeking to cultivate.

In the next century Sidonius also employs the Phaethon story in an imperial panegyric, for the emperor Avitus, his father-in-law. By diplomatic activity, according to Sidonius, he was able to divert the Visigoths from warlike preparations that threatened to bring the same havoc on the world as Phaethon's chariot-ride.¹³ Once again it is Phoebus who is said to save the day by extinguishing the excessive heat by his 'merciful ... flame' (*clemens ... flamma*,

¹² As Lawatsch-Boomgaarden 1992, p. 192, points out, in commenting on the references to Phaethon in *Hon. VI cons.*, the Phaethon myth is also relevant to the characterization of Honorius. Unlike the mythical figure Honorius, according to Claudian, has been trained for kingship from childhood and is fully able to succeed his father.

¹³ The Visigoths are said to be 'loosing the reins for war' (*laxantes frena duello*, *carm. 7. 398*); the metaphor prepares the way for the following Phaethon comparison.

carm. 7. 410). The language again perhaps reflects the qualities of Avitus that Sidonius wants to convey. He combines martial valor (*flamma*) with a willingness to be merciful (*clemens*), subsequently, we hear, pardoning the Visigoths for their hostility. In this poem too Jupiter and his thunderbolt play no role, though Phoebus still fights fire with fire.

The same theme, of fighting fire with fire, occurs in the sixth-century historical epic of Corippus, the *Iohannis* (c. 548 CE). In this case the panegyric aspect is not as pronounced. John Troglita, the hero of the poem, observes from on board ship the land of Africa in flames (I. 323-324). It is like the conflagration that would have been caused by Phaethon if Jupiter, the 'all-powerful father' (*omnipotens genitor*, I. 339), had not intervened, 'extinguishing fire with fire' (*restringens ignibus ignem* I. 340).¹⁴ In this case Jupiter does deploy his thunderbolt, but out of a spirit of compassion for the earth (*terras miseratus*, I. 339). Since in Ovid's account Jupiter's intervention follows directly after the speech of *Tellus* appealing for aid, it would be possible to see Corippus' attribution of pity to Jupiter as an interpretation of the Ovidian story. In Ovid, however, Jupiter is motivated by the fear of universal destruction (*met.* II. 305-306). He does not express any pity for *Tellus*. More important is the role of the episode in characterizing John Troglita as a second Jupiter burning to bring aid to the 'wretched land' (*miseræ [...] terrae*, I. 341) of Africa.¹⁵ The notion that Jupiter acts out of pity also finds expression in the Phaethon episode in Avienus' Latin version of Aratus' *Phaenomena*, where, however, there is no mention of Jupiter's thunderbolt; instead the god just hands back to Apollo control of his journey through heaven.¹⁶

¹⁴ The analogy between the situation in Africa and the Phaethon story finds further reinforcement in the language first used of John's reaction to the flames: 'he recognized the reins of Mars were out of control' (*indomitas Martis cognovit habenas*); that is, Mars, like Phaethon's chariot, was no longer restrained by reins but was running amok.

¹⁵ John's reaction to the plight of Africa finds expression in metaphors of fire (*exarsit ductor*, I. 341; *virtus [...] flagravat*, I. 343), further emphasizing the parallel with Jupiter. In his own way too he responds to fire with fire.

¹⁶ Avienus, *Arat.* 791-792 *donec fata sui miseratus Iuppiter orbis / redderet aetherii Phoebæ moderamina cursus*.

The Phaethon story is also alluded to in two of the imperial panegyrics collected in the so-called *Panegyrici Latini*, both, as it happens, in passages praising Maximian. In the earlier, written for the emperor's birthday in 291, the speaker cites Jupiter's divine governance of the world as a model of kingship to which the earthly ruler conforms. In this process he describes Jupiter's direction of the sun, using language from Ovid's Phaethon story. In Ovid the Sun recounts to Phaethon the difficulties of his journey: 'I struggle against opposition, the force that conquers everything else fails to conquer me, and I travel in an opposite direction to the speeding heavens' (*nitor in adversum nec me, qui cetera, vincit / impetus et rapido contrarius evehor orbi, met.* II. 72-73). The panegyrist employs much of the same language, but to a different end: 'he (Jupiter) speeds on the sun, which struggles against opposition because of the force of the heavens' (*in adversa nitentem impetu caeli rapit solem, Paneg.* II. 3. 5). In conformity with the speaker's panegyric purpose it is Jupiter who guarantees the movement of the sun and with it heavenly order. In Ovid the heavens speed (*rapido*) in opposition to the sun; in the panegyric Jupiter imparts speed to the sun (*rapit*) in opposition to the heavens. It might be objected that the speaker has appropriated Ovidian language here solely for the movement of the heavens, and that the larger Phaethon story has no relevance. But the sentence begins with the statement that Jupiter does not only thunder and hurl lightning bolts; he also adopts more peaceful measures, of which his governance of the heavens is one. The juxtaposition of language derived from Ovid's Phaethon story with a reference to Jupiter's lightning bolt prompts listeners to recall the consequences of a breakdown of good order, as dramatized in the Phaethon story.

Some years later, in 307, another anonymous speaker delivered a panegyric on Maximian and Constantine. In praising the former he draws a somewhat unexpected parallel with the Sun, who 'recovered and once more governed the reins he had unwisely handed over and the chariot that had been thrown off course by its errant driver' (*habenas male creditas et currum devio rectore turbatum reciperet rursumque dirigeret, Paneg.* 7. 12. 3). Maximian similarly had relinquished the reins of control when he reluctantly retired after Diocletian surrendered his powers; but

he assumed them once again when summoned from retirement by his son Maxentius. In this case, however, as Turcan has argued, the figure of Phaethon has a further, more particular relevance.¹⁷ At the time of the speech Maximian had fallen out with his son and joined Constantine. The theme of a son who fell short of his father in rulership would thus accord well with the situation as Maximian saw it.¹⁸ Maxentius is cast in the Phaethon role.

Although it is a reasonable assumption that all these Latin authors, whether writing in prose or verse, knew Ovid's account of the Phaethon story, not all echo the language of the earlier poet. One detail of that account, however, finds some currency. According to Ovid, the horses of the Sun began to run out of control when they realized the 'light weight' (*leve pondus*, *met.* II. 161) the chariot was carrying and that the yoke they bore 'lacked its customary heaviness' (*solitaque iugum gravitate carebat*, *met.* II. 162). A similar point comes up in Germanicus' version of Aratus' *Phaenomena*, where the fall of Phaethon occurs 'after he directed the horses (*equos*) of his father with unfit (*non aequo*) weight' (that is, I take it, he was too light for the job).¹⁹ Which poet wrote first cannot be definitively established,²⁰ but the fact that Germanicus' version is less circumstantial and incorporates a play on words (*equos* [...] *aequo*) might suggest it presupposes an earlier text that made the same point more explicitly, perhaps that of Ovid. A second, more expansive version of the *Phaenomena*, by the fourth-century poet Avienus, treats the same concept more fully, in a manner closer to Ovid, speaking of the horses sensing 'the light burden of their heavenly charioteer' (*leve* [...] / *aetherii rectoris onus*, *Arat.* 786-787).²¹

¹⁷ Turcan 1964, pp. 699-701.

¹⁸ The adequacy of a younger generation to succeed a prestigious leader is also relevant to the circumstances of Augustan Rome. It is significant that Phaethon lacks *gravitas* (*Met.* II. 162), a word with strong moral and political overtones.

¹⁹ *Postquam patris equos non aequo pondere rexit*, *Arat.* 364.

²⁰ Germanicus' poem is conventionally dated to the later years of his life, after 16 CE, but Fantham 1985, p. 254, argues Germanicus at least began the poem before Ovid's exile in 8 CE.

²¹ *Leve cum sensere iugales / aetherii rectoris onus*, *Arat.* 786-787. Like Ovid, Avienus draws attention to the reaction of the horses to being driven by a 'light-weight.'

The adjective *levis* describes Phaethon in two more late Latin texts, in Sidonius' panegyric for Avitus (*carm.* 7. 405) and in a Christian poem, the pseudonymous fifth-century biblical epyllion *de Sodoma*.²² In the case of Sidonius the reference to 'light Phaethon' (*Phaethonta levem*, *carm.* 7. 405) is only fully intelligible to those who know the Ovidian model. The biblical poet's version is a little clearer. He represents the story of Phaethon's flight and the fiery conflagration it caused as a false version of the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.²³ In devoting six lines to an account of the story and its aftermath, he includes the detail that 'the light boy (*levem puerum*, i.e., Phaethon) could not rein in the proud horses of fire' (*de Sodoma* vv. 109-110).²⁴ The association between Phaethon's light weight and his inability to control the horses is implied rather than explicit. Here too knowledge of the Ovidian intertext improves comprehension.

In Ovid's Phaethon story the conclusion of Earth's speech to Jupiter, begging for his intervention, is thematically significant. In it she summarizes her previous arguments and warns of imminent destruction: 'if the seas, the lands, and the palace of heaven perishes, we are thrown into the confusion of primal chaos' (*si freta, si terrae pereunt, si regia caeli, / in Chaos antiquum confundimur*, *met.* II. 298-299). The threat of a reversion to primal chaos, of course, recalls Ovid's description of that state at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, while the form the threat takes, destruction by fire, complements the near-destruction by water in the flood story of book 1. Deucalion and Phaethon are paired together as water and fire in Ovid's *Fasti* (IV. 793-794) and in Martial (v. 53. 4). But the association of the two as comple-

²² The poem is falsely attributed to Tertullian or Cyprian in the manuscripts; see Herzog 1975, pp. XXV-XXXII. It is edited by Peiper 1881, pp. 212-220.

²³ The claim that myths are distorted versions of biblical events is commonly made, especially of Deucalion and the flood, but I have not come across another similar explanation of the Phaethon story. Bordone 2006, pp. 497-515, sees the influence of Ovidian language on the accounts of Elijah's ascent to heaven on fiery horses in Juvenecus (II. 545-546 and III. 265-267) and Paulinus of Nola (*carm.* 6. 77-78). The comparison becomes explicit in the late eleventh century poem *Eupolemius* (II. 610-612).

²⁴ (*Habet [...] fabula famam [...] nec valuuisse levem puerum frenare superbos / ignis equos.*)

mentary forces of destruction finds expression again in the fifth century in the *De Sodom* (1-8), which begins its account of the description of Sodom by fire with a look back to an earlier disaster for the human race, Noah's flood.²⁵

The earth fears that all the world will be destroyed, earth, sea, and sky, if Phaethon's flight is not checked. In using the word *confundimur*, 'we are thrown into confusion,' she summons the specter of the *rudis indigestaque moles* (*met.* 1. 7), that indiscriminate confusion of elements that constitutes chaos in Ovid's account. In the fifth century Sidonius Apollinaris, in his panegyric for Avitus, expands on this fear of reversion to chaos in describing the consequences of Phaethon's wild ride.

[Cum] pax elementorum fureret vel sicca propinquus
saeviret per stagna vapor limusque sitiret
pulvereo ponti fundo (*carm.* 7. 407-409)

'[When] peace among the elements became frenzy, heat came close and raged over the dried-up ponds and mud grew thirsty in the dusty depths of the sea.'

Sidonius' account derives from Ovid's treatment of creation. The conflict of wet and dry he describes recalls Ovidian chaos, in which 'cold fought with warm, *wet with dry*' (*pugnabant* [...] *umentia siccis*, *met.* 1. 19). By characterizing the stable condition of the world before Phaethon's flight as 'peace among the elements' (*pax elementorum*), he perhaps has in mind the action of Ovid's creator god, who binds earth, air, sky, and heaven in their places in a 'harmonious peace' (*concordi pace ligavit*, *met.* 1. 25). But it is likely too that he has in mind the widespread belief, primarily Stoic, that the harmony of the universe depends on the mutual resistance of contrasting elements that secures an equilibrium of opposites and a stable state; what a slightly earlier Gallic poet, Orientius, describes as *pacis concordia* (*comm.* 1. 601).²⁶ Phaethon's flight throws out this balance, becoming a force for *discordia*.

²⁵ Deucalion and Phaethon are also mentioned together by Lactantius (*inst.* 11. 10. 23).

²⁶ See Lapidge 1980, pp. 825-837, and Roberts 2002, pp. 411-413.

The ordered system of the universe, which Phaethon imperils, finds expression right at the beginning of book 2 in Ovid's account in the decoration on the doors of the palace of the Sun. Earth, sea, and sky are represented there, embodying just that stable universe that will be threatened with disarray.²⁷ The god himself is enthroned, surrounded by personifications of the divisions of time and the seasons. The regular progression of time too, it is implied, is liable to disruption if the Sun's chariot runs out of control, for it is the Sun that serves as a temporal regulator guaranteeing the orderliness of measured time. Without regular temporal divisions chaos ensues: according to Macrobius (*Sat.* I. 8. 7) in chaos there are no clear distinctions of time, just as, in Ovid's account in book one, the elements are not distinguished in space.²⁸ The two descriptive passages at the beginning of book two reflect the order of space, time, and hierarchy that Phaethon's failure to control the chariot of the Sun imperils.

Ovid's poem, then, juxtaposes a pair of descriptions, one of them of a work of art, that communicate divine order with a narrative that recounts the imminent destruction of that order. Something similar happens in Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*. At the end of book one (I. 246-268) Proserpine is embroidering a tapestry on which appears a harmonious universe whose constituent parts Nature has duly ordered, correcting their former disarray (*veterem [...] tumultum*, I. 249); her dress at the beginning of book 2 shows the childhood of the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon, bringers of day and night (II. 41-54). This cosmic order, represented, as in Ovid, in works of art – in Claudian's case needlework – comes under challenge in the narrative of the poem with Pluto's eruption into the upper world to carry off Proserpine.²⁹ It is tempting to believe that Ovid's Phaethon story provided a structural model for Claudian's poem, especially as in both

²⁷ Brown 1987, p. 214. Bass 1977, p. 404, points out that the repetition of the phrase *Doridaque et natas* (II. 11 and 269) in the description of the palace doors and in the narrative proper invites comparison of the two situations.

²⁸ See Zissos and Gildenhard 1999, pp. 32-36. The passage from Macrobius reads: *cum chaos esset, tempora non fuisse, siquidem tempus est certa dimensio quae ex caeli conversione colligitur*.

²⁹ See Charlet 2000, pp. 191-192.

authors the agent of the destruction is a charioteer whose actions threaten to break through and dissolve the boundaries that constitute the ordered world. Unlike Phaethon Pluto does not lose control of his horses, but his actions potentially have the same effect. The parallel is reinforced by Claudian's choice of language. He regularly calls the underworld *chaos*.³⁰ With Pluto's actions *chaos* invades the world above.

Even independently of its relation to the rest of the Phaethon narrative, Ovid's depiction of the palace of the Sun resonates with readers of late Latin poetry. Commentators on this passage have looked back to earlier poetry for influences on Ovid. The tripartite division of the universe, for instance, that appears on the doors of the palace already makes an appearance in the *Iliad* on Achilles' shield (xviii. 483); both Virgil (*georg.* III. 26-33, *Aen.* I. 455-493 and VI. 20-33) and Propertius (II. 31. 12-14) describe the decoration of temple doors, though there are no parallels with Ovid in the subjects depicted. Works of art too have been canvassed as models, though without winning assent. Scholars have generally been unpersuaded that Ovid has in mind the temple of Apollo on the Palatine, as suggested by Bartholomé.³¹ In reality, as Brown writes, Ovid's account has no known precedent.³² His description does not always meet expectations conditioned by earlier ecphrastic texts: he has been criticized for imperfectly integrating narrative and description; the absence of an interactive relationship between work of art and viewer in the manner of Virgil has occasioned regret.³³ It is in this respect that an approach that looks for parallels in subsequent literature may be helpful to an appreciation of Ovid's *tour de force*, for in many ways it is late Latin poetry *avant la lettre*.

Ovid's palace of the Sun initiates a series of such descriptions of fantasy architecture. Apuleius describes the palace of Venus

³⁰ *Rapt.* I. 28; II. 13; II. 196.

³¹ Bartholomé 1935, pp. 17-18; see for the counterargument Herter 1958, pp. 53-56, and Brown 1987, p. 212.

³² Brown 1987, p. 211.

³³ For criticism of the relation between narration and description see Galinsky 1975, p. 97. Barchiesi 2008, p. 236, is unconvinced by Galinsky's criticism, recognizing the thematic relevance of the description to the themes of order and chaos, but does regret the absence of Virgilian intersubjectivity.

(*met.* v. 1); the epithalamia of Claudian for the emperor Honorius and his bride Maria (*Hon. nupt.* 85-91) and of Sidonius for Ruricius and Hiberia (*carm.* 11. 14-33) also contain accounts of buildings dedicated to that goddess (a palace and a temple), both attributed, like the palace of the Sun in Ovid, to the work of Vulcan.³⁴ And in Sidonius' panegyric for the emperor Anthemius the house of Dawn (*domus Aurorae*) possesses the same brilliance as the Sun's abode in Ovid (*carm.* 2. 418-421). In this last case the brilliance of the building is matched and even outdone by the appearance of Aurora herself (*carm.* 2. 421-423). Similarly in Ovid the brightness of the Sun's palace, evidenced in the first four lines of the description, figures that of the Sun himself. The principle that the building is the measure of the owner is set forth in a fragmentarily preserved panegyric by Cassiodorus for the marriage in 536 of the Ostrogothic king Vitigis to Matasuentha, sister of Athalaric, of the Amal dynasty. Cassiodorus praises the bride: 'You have created a palace, my lady, to clearly show who you are even to those who do not know you, since from the magnificence of a dwelling is understood the greatness of its inhabitant'.³⁵ The *regia Solis* similarly communicates the nature and the status of its inhabitant.

Ovid's account of the Sun palace begins with its external appearance – columns, gables, door – emphasizing height and especially brilliance. Although in this first section (vv. 1-18) Phaethon is not mentioned, the palace is described as it would appear to him from outside as he approached. As is regularly the case in such passages of ecphrasis, the account of the decoration of the doors follows a simple organizing principle³⁶ – sea, lands, and heaven – set forth in the introductory lines (vv. 6-7) and elaborated in the same order in what follows (vv. 8-18). The same taxonomic regularity is observable in the account of earth (vv. 15-16), where Ovid enumerates three locations – cities, forests, and rivers –

³⁴ Filolini 2014, pp. 42-45 and 56, argues for the influence of Ovid's Phaethon story on the structure of Sidonius' epithalamium, as well as on individual passages.

³⁵ Cassiodorus, *Or.* 2 *fecisti quoque, domina, palatium, quod te etiam ignotis evidenter ostenderet, quando ex ingenti habitaculo residentis colligitur magnitudo* (MGH. AA. XII, p. 483. 6-9).

³⁶ See Roberts 1989, pp. 42-43.

and the inhabitants of each – men, wild animals, and nymphs; only the last phrase in these lines breaks the mold, almost as an afterthought, with the addition of ‘the other country divinities’ (*cetera numina ruris*, v. 16). By its greater length the section devoted to the sea somewhat breaks the regularity (seven lines instead of the two for each of the other divisions of the world), thereby introducing an element of *variatio*. It contains an enumeration of sea divinities (*caeruleos [...] deos*, v. 8), ending with the sea goddess Doris and her daughters. Brown suggests influence from Moschus’ *Europa* (vv. 117-124), which describes Poseidon, Nereids, and Tritons accompanying the bull that is carrying off Zeus’ prey.³⁷ Certainly this is possible. But this feature also anticipates future developments in late antique art and literature. Scenes of marine life and of sea divinities were already popular in the Hellenistic period, but they enjoy a special vogue in late antiquity, in literature especially in epithalamia.³⁸ Such passages often itemize the activities of individual Nereids, as Ovid does of the daughters of Doris. One distinction is that typically scenes of this kind have at their center a high status figure, usually Venus, for whom the inhabitants of the sea form a subordinate retinue. Ovid, by comparison, emphasizes the carefree play of the sea divinities as a contrast to their behavior later in the story, when they seek refuge in underwater caves to escape the heat of the sun chariot (v. 269).

The impression of an ordered universe Ovid creates does not depend on the manner in which the scenes are distributed on the imagined work of art, but rather on the poet’s textual organization of his material. Until the last line of the passage reference to the spatial arrangement of the scenes is limited to the notice that the heavens are on top (7 and 17). The last line (18) is the exception, with the twelve signs of the zodiac distributed symmetrically on either panel of the double door. (There is no mention of the

³⁷ Brown 1987, p. 218.

³⁸ For examples from late antiquity in art see Roberts 2014, pp. 121-124. In poetry the subject is particularly characteristic of epithalamia (Claudian, *Hon. nupt.* 149-171, Sidonius, *carm.* 11. 34-46; cf. Claudian, *carm. min.* 30. 122-129); Apuleius, *met.* IV. 31, provides a prose example. Statius, *Ach.* I. 54-60, has a rather different group of creatures attend Neptune. For the influence of Ovid on the Sidonius passage see Filosiini 2014, pp. 145-146.

twin panels in the earlier description of earth, sea, and sky.) This arrangement parallels that of Minerva's tapestry in the Arachne story, where six gods sit on either side of Jupiter, who is in the center (*met.* vi. 72-73). There is the same symmetry, expressing order, but in that case also the desire to communicate the authority of the ruler of the gods as dispenser and guarantor of order by his central position.

In Ovid's account the status of Phoebus/the Sun is established in the next scene, in which Phaethon comes through the double doors into the palace to catch his first sight of the enthroned god, surrounded by attendant subordinate divinities. The brilliance of Phoebus dazzles the young man (cf. also *met.* ii. 40-41), as do the trappings of his power, his purple robe and especially his throne, 'shining with radiant emeralds' (*met.* ii. 24 *claris lucente smaragdis*). Such a vision of an enthroned figure of high status is familiar in late antiquity. It seems to have particularly caught the imagination of the North African poet Corippus, when he came to write his poem celebrating the accession in 565 of the eastern emperor Justin II. In the fourth book of his *In laudem Iustini* he describes the emperor's magnificent throne, 'resplendent with gold and jewels, possessing its own light without the sun',³⁹ a throne which, he goes on to say, 'overshadowed the beams of brilliant Phoebus' (*Iust.* iv. 118 *Phoebe radios fulgentis obumbrans*). The comparison of the throne with the light of the sun already suggests a reference to Ovid's description. But a further turn of phrase clinches the allusion. Among the precious materials decorating the throne is 'flame-breathing pyropus' (*Iust.* iv. 120-121 *flammasque pyropos / adflans*), an alloy of gold and bronze. Judging by the Cetedoc *Library of Latin Texts*, Corippus is the first poet to employ this word since the *Metamorphoses*, where it is one of the building materials of the Sun's palace. Ovid's wording, 'flame-imitating pyropus' (*met.* ii. 2 *flammasque imitante pyropo*), evidently lies behind Corippus' language. The sixth-century poet has transferred language used by Ovid of the Sun's palace to Justin's throne. That throne, admittedly, in its multiple precious materials and effects of contrasted colors

³⁹ Corippus, *Iust.* iv. 114-116 *aedibus in magnis miro constructa paratu / extabat sedes, auro gemmisque superba, / lumen habens sine sole suum.*

and shapes, far exceeds the throne of Phoebus in Ovid, being more reminiscent of the elaborately jeweled thrones of Christian apse and dome mosaics.⁴⁰ But there is little doubt that Corippus is thinking of the Ovid text. It is revealing that the passage had such an appeal for a sixth-century author describing contemporary imperial ceremonial.

The enthroned Phoebus sits surrounded on right and left by the attendant divinities of time, Day, Month, Year, Ages, Hours, and Seasons. His central situation, as with Jupiter on Minerva's tapestry, communicates his status. Koeppel has noticed the technique in imperial relief sculpture, labeling it a 'figural niche'.⁴¹ The same figural composition occurs in Claudian's epithalamium for the marriage of Honorius and Maria, in which 'the Idalian sisters (i.e., the Graces) were standing on the left and right' (*Hon. nupt.* 100-101 *dextra laevaque sorores / stabant Idaliae*) of Venus, who is seated on a glistening throne (*corusco [...] solio*, *Hon. nupt.* 99-100). In Ovid's account only the Seasons are specifically described as standing, but it is likely true also of the other attendant divinities. Corippus, too, describes a similar formation round the emperor Justin II, but this time in procession, with armed bands on his right and left and the excubitors, the palace guard, in the rear (*Iust.* iv. 239-242).

In his representation of the Seasons Ovid introduces an innovation. They are frequently represented in art and literature of both the classical and late antique periods. But I know of no other poetic text that represents them so clearly as personifications.⁴² The normal procedure is to characterize the seasons literally by their products or climate. Ovid's account shows some parallels with the tradition of artistic representations; each season is an individual figure whose attributes or appearance allude

⁴⁰ For instance, the late fourth-century apse mosaic in S. Pudenziana in Rome or the hetoimasia scene in Ravenna's Orthodox Baptistry.

⁴¹ Koeppel 1982, p. 519.

⁴² I have compiled a list of over forty such passages. For the appeal of such passages to the late Latin poet see Roberts 1989, p. 43. Representations of Phaethon before an enthroned Sun, who is flanked by the Seasons, go back at least to the first century CE; see Hanfmann 1951, vol. 1, pp. 116-117 and 128-129, and vol. 2, p. 143.

to their characteristic products or features.⁴³ Riese's *Anthologia Latina* includes a sequence of 13 tetrastichs on the subject of the seasons, preserved in ninth-century manuscripts (*AL* 567-578). Ovid's four lines begin the sequence (not included in the numeration of Riese). He is the only poet in the group to personify the seasons as anthropomorphic figures.

It is difficult to overemphasize how familiar the account of the Sun's palace would be to a late Roman reader. In the period access to figures of high status was regularly controlled for maximum impact by architectural detail and the manipulation of space. Whether coming before the owner of a rich villa or entering the imperial presence, visitors would follow a prescribed path, often axially arranged, culminating in the impressive spectacle of the *dominus* of the estate or the emperor himself. The impact of that powerful presence might be enhanced by the use of jewels or precious metals and the effects of color and light, the late Roman language of status.⁴⁴ Typically the high status figure would be seated or enthroned; above him might be what the art historian L'Orange called a 'glorification gable', a framework of arches and columns that enhanced architecturally the impression made by the great man.⁴⁵ On either side we can imagine other subordinate figures, drawing further attention to the status of the central figure. All these features can be seen on the Missorium of Theodosius (388 CE), currently in Madrid. There the emperor Theodosius is flanked, under an arched and columned structure, by the junior emperors Valentinian II and Arcadius, who in turn are flanked by armed soldiers. Ovid's account of the palace and court of the Sun lacks an equivalent to the glorification gable, but in all other respects it conforms to late antique expectations. In late antiquity too a petitioner could expect to be dazzled by the splendor of the person before him, enhanced as it was likely to be by brilliant and colorful materials and reflecting surfaces.⁴⁶

⁴³ Herter 1958, p. 72. In general, however, Herter (pp. 70-73) is skeptical about Ovid's reliance on works of art in his representation of the seasons.

⁴⁴ The classic article is MacMullen (1964), pp. 435-455.

⁴⁵ L'Orange 1965, pp. 74-76.

⁴⁶ Compare the reaction of the leader of an Avar embassy to appearing before Justin II in Corippus (*Iust.* III. 256-259). He throws himself to the ground

Christian basilicas conformed to the same aesthetic. Prudentius describes the basilica of St Hippolytus in Rome. The eyes of worshippers follow a wide central aisle, flanked by lower side-aisles, to the raised platform in front of them, from where the priest preaches of God (*Perist.* 11. 223-226).⁴⁷ We can imagine as frame and backdrop to this scene something like the decoration Prudentius describes of S. Paolo fuori le mura: beams set with brilliant plates of precious metal, 'so that all the light within was golden like sunbeams at dawn' (*Perist.* 12. 49-50) and arches encrusted with multicolored mosaics (*Perist.* 12. 53-54).⁴⁸ And behind in the apse Christ or a representation of his glory might be represented in a brilliant halo of light. Worshippers entering the basilica would experience something very like Phaethon's response on entering the palace of the Sun. Their sight would be dazzled and they would sense they were in the presence of divinity. Something of the same spirit informs Prudentius' account of the temple of the soul, in which Wisdom sits enthroned in a hall supported by seven crystal pillars (cf. Prov. 9. 1) within a shell-shaped niche cut from a fabulously precious pearl (*psych.* 868-877).

One last feature completes the image of solar splendor, the Sun's chariot: 'its axle was golden, its chariot-pole golden, and golden the curve of its wheel-rims, while the circle of spokes was silver chrysolites and jewels in ordered sequence on the yoke gave back brilliant light to Phoebus whom they reflected' (*met.* II. 107-110).⁴⁹ The language communicates a dazzling blur of light in which Sun god and chariot become fused into a single radiant vision. It seems likely that this passage inspired Sidonius' account of Venus' splendid chariot in his epithalamium for

in adoration, in response to the gilded brilliance of the reception hall and the radiance of the diadem worn by the emperor.

⁴⁷ *At medios aperit tractus via latior alti / culminis exurgens editiore apice. / Fronte sub adversa gradibus sublime tribunal / tollitur, antistes praedicat unde Deum.*

⁴⁸ *Bratteolas trabibus sublevit, ut omnis aurulenta / lux esset intus ceu iubar sub ortu. / [...] Tum camiros hyalo insigni varie cucurrit arcus; / sic prata vernis floribus renident.*

⁴⁹ *Aureus axis erat, temo aureus, aurea summae / curvatura rotae, radiorum argenteus ordo; / per iuga chrysolithi positaeque ex ordine gemmae / clara repercusso reddebant lumina Phoebos.*

Ruricius and Iberia (*carm.* 11. 93-104).⁵⁰ Although the details are different, the itemization of yoke, chariot-pole, wheel-rims, and spokes conforms to the Ovidian model.

A second chariot description from late antiquity strikes a different note. The chariot in question 'shines with the multi-colored light of jewels' (Prudentius, *psych.* 334 *varia gemmarum luce micantem*); the reins 'crackle with gold foil' (*psych.* 335 *bratteolis crepitantia lora*), the axle is of solid gold, the spokes of silver, and the wheel-rims of electrum.⁵¹ But the charioteer is *Luxuria*. In the battle for the human soul she eventually will fall victim to *Sobrietas*, and her body will be run over by her own chariot (*psych.* 414-416). Prudentius' enumeration of chariot parts – axle, spokes, and wheel-rims – already suggests the influence of Ovid's Sun-chariot, but the similar language used to describe the spokes of the wheel (*radiorum argenteus ordo*, *met.* II. 108, *radiorum / argento albentem seriem*, *psych.* 337-338) and the wheel-rims (*aurea summae / curvature rotae*; *met.* II. 107-108, *summa rotarum / flexura*, *psych.* 338-339) leaves little room to doubt such influence. Here, though, such brilliant display receives a negative evaluation. It embodies that enslavement to material possessions, self-indulgence, and devotion to pleasure that divert from the pursuit of Christian virtue. Just as the brilliance of the chariot dazzles and disorients the observers (*defixis inhiant obtutibus*, *psych.* 337), so Christians lose their sense of moral discrimination when befuddled by the allure of luxury (*obstupefacti*, *psych.* 333).⁵² The precious materials of *Luxuria*'s chariot are both a temptation to wealth and material acquisition in themselves and a symbol for the self-indulgence in pleasure that *luxuria* more broadly connotes.

⁵⁰ Filolini 2014, pp. 205-206. She suggests, persuasively, that the application of such language to Venus' chariot was inspired in part also by Statius' epithalamium for Stella and Violentilla, which speaks of a jeweled chariot-pole (*gemma temone*, *silv.* I. 2. 144) to the goddess' chariot.

⁵¹ *Dum currum varia gemmarum luce micantem / mirantur, dum bratteolis crepitantia lora / et solido ex auro pretiosi ponderis axem / defixis inhiant obtutibus et radiorum / argento albentem seriem, quam summa rotarum / flexura electri pal-lentis continet orbe* (*psych.* 334-339).

⁵² The phrase *defixis inhiant obtutibus* recalls two Virgilian passages: Aeneas's reaction to the decoration of the doors of Juno's temple in Carthage (*dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno*, *Aen.* I. 495) and Latinus' pensive response to the words of Ilioneus (*defixa Latinus / obtutu tenet ora*, *Aen.* VII. 249-250).

Prudentius is not the first to read skeptically Ovid's account of the Sun's splendor. In the classical period Seneca the Younger in one of his letters to Lucilius (*epist.* 115. 13) cites the first line and a half of *Metamorphoses*, book two, of the *Regia Solis*, and the first two lines of the description of the Sun's chariot (*met.* II. 107-108) to support his argument that the poets can have a damaging effect on morality by glamorizing wealth and praising it as 'the only glory and ornament of life' (*epist.* 115. 12 *unicum vitae decus ornamentumque*).⁵³ A similar suspicion of material display finds expression three centuries or more later in the writings of Jerome. He contrasts, for instance, the marble sheathing, gilded ceilings, and altars encrusted with jewels of contemporary basilicas with the lack of care shown in choosing Christ's ministers (*epist.* 52. 10).⁵⁴ In this attitude Jerome is swimming against the tide of ecclesiastical opinion. Another letter gives an even fuller list of church fittings – marble-sheathed walls, massive columns with gilded capitals, doors of ivory and silver and gold or gilded altars picked out with precious stones. Somewhat surprisingly, and against the tenor of his rhetoric, he concludes, 'I do not find fault [with this], I do not object' (*epist.* 130. 14 *non reprehendo, non abnuo*).⁵⁵ Nonetheless he expresses a preference for alms for the poor over expenditure on beautifying churches.

Although there is no reason to think Jerome is recalling Ovid's palace of the Sun in these passages, his discomfort with such material display has something in common with Seneca's reaction to Ovid's text. The Christian basilicas of Jerome's day were seeking by way of brilliant effects of color and light to create the

⁵³ It seems likely that Seneca's attitude to the Ovid passages owes something to his experience of material extravagance in the Neronian court, especially as Nero came to identify himself with the Sun.

⁵⁴ *Marmora nitent, auro splendent lacunaria, gemmis altare distinguitur et ministrorum Christi nulla electio est.*

⁵⁵ *Alii aedificent ecclesias, vestiant parietes marmorum crustis; columnarum moles advehant earumque obaurent capita pretiosum ornatum non sententia; ebove argentoque valvas, et gemmis aurea vel aurata distinguant altaria. Non reprehendo, non abnuo* (see too, *In Hieremiam prophetam* II. 32; CSEL 59; 95: 14-16). In letter 60 Nepotianus wins praise for seeking out adornment for the church, with the qualification that he himself is still more adorned by his poverty (*sicut ... paupertate incedit ornatio, ita totum ecclesiae investigat ornatum* (*epist.* 60. 11).

impression of proximity to the divine that Ovid communicates in his account of the *regia Solis*. Worshipers in such basilicas could feel themselves temporarily removed from the everyday and transported to heaven. It is not surprising then, that a sixth-century poet, Venantius Fortunatus, incorporates language from the palace of the Sun into his account of heaven. He celebrates the blessedness of the hero of his hagiographical epic, St Martin of Tours, for having seen the gates of Sion (cf. Ps 86. 2), which the poet describes as 'cloaked in the multicolored light of jewels (*gemmarum vario redimitas lumine valvas*), encrusted with gold leaf, skillfully decked with emeralds, ruddy with chrysolites, and snow-white with starlike pearls' (*Mart.* III. 512-514).⁵⁶ In describing the gates of heaven Fortunatus echoes a line ending from Ovid's account of the doors of the palace of the Sun (*lumine valvae, met.* II. 4).⁵⁷ The language prompts a comparison between the two portals. The Christian heaven not only outdoes its pagan predecessor in the splendor of its decoration but also presents from a Christian perspective a contrast between a mythical celestial edifice and a true one.

One last feature of Ovid's Phaethon story is relevant to Christian descriptions of heaven. Earth, in the peroration to her speech begging for Jupiter's intervention, fears the imminent destruction of seas, lands, and 'the palace of heaven' (*met.* II. 298 *regia caeli*). The phrase is Virgilian (*georg.* I. 503, *Aen.* VII. 210), used in the *Aeneid* of the apotheosis of Dardanus; the association with apotheosis continues in Lucan (I. 46, of Nero). In the *Metamorphoses* the immediate context suggests the phrase refers to the physical constitution of the heavens. In poetry it is often just a synonym for *caelum*. Among Christian poets it is a favorite of Juvencus for the Christian heaven (I. 467, I. 482, II. 513, II. 539) and, presumably under his influence, Damasus (*epigr.* 11. 11, 16. 3, 25. 2, 39. 4, 47. 3). But in the *Metamorphoses* the phrase is not just a substitute for *caelum*.⁵⁸ After all the book begins with

⁵⁶ *Gemmarum vario redimitas lumine valvas, / sculptas bratteolis, inscriptas arte zmaragdis, / chrysolitis rutilas, niveas stellantibus albis.*

⁵⁷ The line ending *lumine valvis* also occurs in Paulinus of Nola's account of the building work at the shrine of Felix (*carm.* 27. 378), but the contextual relevance to Ovid is less clear.

⁵⁸ Bömer 1969, p. 316, '*regia caeli* ist hier einfach i.q. *caelum*'.

a description of a *regia* in the full architectural sense, the palace of the Sun. In so far as that palace and its court embody the stable order and regular movements of heavenly bodies, it is an architectural expression of the natural order of the heavens. *Regia Solis* and *regia caeli* are essentially equivalent. In the larger context what otherwise might be a dead metaphor is reanimated.⁵⁹

The Ovidian model provides a precedent for understanding the heavens in architectural terms. A pair of Christian poets develop this imagery. The poem *De Iesu Christo Deo et homine*, probably of the fifth century and of unknown authorship, describes Jesus' ascension to heaven, combining meteorological and architectural language.⁶⁰

Dominumque capit per media caeli,
sideribus gemmata domus, cui limina claris
pandit stella comis, decus iridis atria curvat,
porticibus lux ampla iacet (vv. 124-127)

‘A palace jeweled with stars receives the Lord; stars make visible its thresholds with their clear rays, the glory of the rainbow makes curved its courts, and generous light falls on its porticoes.’

The poet here has attempted to match features of the natural heavens (stars, rainbow, generous light) with the details of a building (palace, thresholds, courts, porticoes), somewhat awkwardly, it must be admitted. There is no way of knowing whether Ovid was an influence, but the principle of a homology between a palace and the heavens is Ovidian.

The corpus of the sixth-century poet Venantius Fortunatus contains a number of descriptions of heaven, but typically he concentrates on its occupants rather than describing their environment. An exception is a recruitment poem for the Convent of the Holy Cross in Poitiers, with which he was associated. In it he describes the heavenly reward that awaits Christian virgins.

Sunt ibi crysolitis fabricata palatia gemmis
atque zmaragdineo ianua poste viret.

⁵⁹ See Brown 1987, p. 214: ‘The metaphor *regia caeli* revives the former symbolic equation of palace and cosmos’.

⁶⁰ The text can be found in *PLS, Suppl.* vol. 3, cols 1135-1139.

Limina sardonichum variato lumine florent
 et hyacinteus circuit ordo domum.
 Aurea tecta micant, plebs aurea fulget in aula
 et cum rege pio turba corusca nitet. (VIII. 4. 17-22)

'There the palace is made from chrysolite gemstones and the doors glow green with emerald doorposts. The thresholds bloom with the variegated brightness of sardonyx and a band of hyacinth circles the building. The roofs gleam golden, a golden company shines in the hall, and with their loving king a glittering throng beams bright.'

Fortunatus, unlike the poet of *De Iesu Christo Deo et homine*, makes no attempt to match meteorological phenomena with elements of architecture. His heaven is unambiguously a royal palace.⁶¹ In a typical turn, in the last couplet, the brilliance of the setting is matched by the brilliance of the company that occupies it. Although Fortunatus knew the *Metamorphoses* and Ovid's account of the palace of the Sun, there is no evidence of direct Ovidian influence on this passage. But his account owes much to a descriptive tradition that finds its first, influential exponent in Latin poetry in Ovid, with his account of the *regia Solis*.

The material I have collected demonstrates the continuing significance of Ovid's Phaethon story for poets and panegyrists of late antiquity. Phaethon's disastrous flight and Jupiter's restoration of order had already received political interpretations in the classical period and this remains the predominant interpretation in the following centuries. Ovid's subtle characterization of the competing interests of Apollo, as father of Phaethon, and Jupiter, as the world ruler, finds no echoes in subsequent Latin literature; Jupiter and Apollo may work separately or together to restore order. But Ovid's descriptions of the palace, court, and chariot of the Sun have special resonance in the period. I have argued that the structure of Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* shows the influence of Ovid in the relationship between ecphrastic models of order and the narrative in which they are set. But generally the appeal of Ovid's Sun god does not depend on the

⁶¹ Fortunatus also describes heaven as a *gemmata palatia* (*carm.* x. 7. 23), where he speaks of its *aurea tecta*, and a *celsa palatia* (*Mart.* II. 464).

larger Phaethon story. A vision of an enthroned ruler, in a setting that communicates his power and status, with a surrounding décor of brilliant light, employing a variety of precious materials, could not fail to strike a chord. Whether in Christian basilicas or imperial reception halls the same aesthetic reigns; Fortunatus conceives of heaven in similar terms. Descriptions of richly appointed buildings, of thrones and their occupants, and of splendid chariots recur in late antiquity, following a model first set by Ovid. This is not to say that in every case Ovid is a direct influence, though often there is evidence that that is the case. Either way Ovid's image of the Sun god and his use of material trappings to convey that image uncannily point the way to the visual language of power and prestige in late antiquity.

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Abstract

This paper studies the presence of Ovid's account of the fall of Phaethon in the poets and panegyrists of late antiquity. In the first part I review explicit references to the story, which typically adopt the political interpretation already prevalent in the classical period, and cite a number of texts that echo the language or distinctive features of Ovid's account. In the second part I concentrate on Ovid's descriptions of the palace, court, and chariot of the Sun, describing their affinities to the late antique language of power and prestige and proposing continuities with Christian views of heaven.

PRESENCE OF, REFERENCES TO
AND ECHOES OF OVID IN THE WORKS
OF RUTILIUS NAMATIANUS,
SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS
AND AVITUS OF VIENNE

In this paper we will attempt to study the presence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in later writings in a broad sense including all forms of intertextuality, whether quotations, references or echoes. Our analysis will be restricted to certain verses by three of the most representative authors of Late Antique Gaul: Rutilius Namatianus, Sidonius Apollinaris and Alcimus Avitus. The works of these authors permit us to point out some features of the differing usage of the *Metamorphoses* in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. We will not attempt to give to the reader a complete and exhaustive *excursus* on Ovidian presence in these works; our purpose is to retrace the concrete usage of the *Metamorphoses* beyond the 'massive' presence of Ovidian exile poems, and also to inquire into the occurrences of the same Ovidian passages in the works that we have chosen.

*Rutilius Namatianus and the Partial Absence
of the Metamorphoses*

In Rutilius Namatianus's *De reditu suo* the critics have shown considerable presence of Ovid's works taken as a model, especially the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*.¹ Rutilius' journey takes on an Ovidian colouration in representing his forced return to Gaul as a gloomy exile from Rome. This feeling is the core of the poem, which is characterized by features and *clichés* belonging to

¹ Fo 1989.

various literary genres. As many studies have shown, Rutilius' *de reditu* cannot in fact be assigned to a single genre, simply because its peculiarity lies in the combination of the various literary and poetic forms in the narrative and in the description of the stages of the journey. The narration variously assumes the features of an encomium of Rome and of the *Romanitas*, the elegiac tone and the characteristics of the *syntaktikos logos*, the form of the *itineraria* and an affinity with the epigrams shown by many *tableaux*.² This 'mélange des genres et des tons'³ materializes as a range of microcosms linked to each other in recalling Ovid. Ovid's exilic poetry, however, is not a structural model and there is no complete and substantial identification between Rutilius and Ovid: rather, what we can perceive in Rutilius, according to Fo 1989, is a strong alignment to Ovidian exilic verses and feeling. The Ovidian framework is the poem's main 'centre of gravity' and the only literary source (apart from the omnipresent Virgil) that Rutilius makes really recognizable to his audience.

The first book of the *De reditu* presents a quotation from the *Tristia* in the opening verses; at the end of the same book we find some echoes of *trist.* I. 11 and especially an identification with *trist.* I. 3. 55 in the image of the poet who leaves Rome.⁴ Étienne Wolff in his edition recalls that Ov. *trist.* I. 11. 1-2 relates that all the poems of the book were composed during the journey to Tomis. Wolff remarks that this is one of the thematic affinities with Rutilius' work⁵ and also recalls the similarity between Rut. Nam. I. 195-196 ~ Ov. *Pont.* I. 3. 33-34; Rut. Nam. I. 201-202 ~ Ov. *trist.* III. 12. 23-24.⁶

² On the literary genre to which to ascribe Rutilius' poem see Paschoud 1979, Fo 1989 and Brocca 2003. For a critical point about this question see the introduction of Wolff 2007, whose edition we use. The Ovidian text is quoted from Tarrant 2004. The differences between Tarrant's edition and the previous ones are quoted in our notes.

³ I adopt the definition of Fontaine 1977.

⁴ Cf. Rut. Nam. I. 5-6 ~ Ov. *trist.* III. 12. 25-26; Rut. Nam. I. 43-44 ~ Ov. *trist.* I. 3. 55-58.

⁵ Wolff 2007, p. xii n. 13. Concerning this problem, Vessereau 1904, p. 254, argued for a composition of the poem day by day during the journey; according to Fo 1989, p. 57, Rutilius composed the poem just after the journey in Gaul as was suggested by Paschoud 1978, p. 328, who supposes a sort of preparatory work with notes taken while sailing.

⁶ Wolff 2007, p. xxxi.

The commentary of Doblhofer 1977⁷ shows that the intertextual relationships existing between the echoes of Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* and the echoes and quotations from Virgil and Statius are in a way similar to those of Claudian and Ausonius.⁸ Fo 1989 has effectively illustrated Rutilius' skill in including the Ovidian model in narration in particular. Rutilius begins by creating a reflection of the Ovidian exile experience and then creates and develops a narration of his own, in which he includes suggestions and features taken from his vast literary culture, which results from the use of and reference to many different genres.⁹ Ovidian verses provide a kind of repertoire of archetypical images, emotions and *topoi* which Rutilius employs to relate his own experience. By contrast, the model of the *Metamorphoses* is not particularly apparent in the poem, compared with the Ovidian exile poetry; the occurrences listed in the index of the Vessereau edition¹⁰ reveal only a few *loci* compared to the many echoes of *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. This almost complete absence of Ovid's epic is justified by both the general tone and the inspiration of the *De reditu* – more elegiac than epic – and the absence of a truly epic afflatus in Rutilius' subject. The *loci* of the *Metamorphoses* cited by Vessereau are:

- (a). I. 98 *qua vix imbriferas tolleret Iris aquas* ~ met. I. 271 *concipit Iris aquas alimentaue nubibus adfert*;
- (b). I. 156 *temperet aequoream dux Cytherea viam* ~ met. XII. 94 *Nereaque et natas et totum temperat aequor* (combined with Ov. *her.* 19. 160 *sternet et aequoreas, aequore nata, vias*);
- (c). I. 240 *angustosque aditus insula facta tegit* ~ met. XI. 728-730 *adiacet undis / facta manu moles, quae primas aequoris iras / frangit*;
- (d). I. 433 *sic dubitanda solet gracili vanescere cornu* ~ met. II. 117 *cornuaue extremae velut evanescere lunae*;

⁷ We will take into account this commentary and Fo 1992 and Pozzato-Rodighiero 2011; we'll also quote Castorina 1967.

⁸ See also Lana 1961. For Ausonius in Rutilius see Green 1991, pp. 471, 481, 506 and 466 and Guttilla 1994-1995.

⁹ Squillante 2005 and Soler 2005, pp. 255-305, focus especially on the thematic links with the odeporic genre.

¹⁰ Vessereau 1904.

- (e). I. 626 *terribilisque cadit fulmine dentis aper* ~ *met. I. 305 nec vires fulminis apro*; x. 550 *fulmen habent acres in aduncis dentibus apri*;
- (f). I. 631-632 *interea madidis non desinit Africus alis / continuos picea nube negare*¹¹ *dies* ~ *met. I. 264-265 madidis Notus evolat alis, / terribilem picea tectus caligine vultum*;
- (g). II. 15-16 *incipiunt Appennini devexa videri, / qua fremit aereo monte repulsa Thetis* ~ *met. II. 226 Aeriaeque Alpes et nubifer Appenninus*;¹²
- (h). II. 53 *odimus Althaeam consumpti funere torris* ~ *met. VIII. 479-498*

The editor did not explain how or to what extent Rutilius reworked Ovidian verses; likewise Doblhofer in his commentary notes the same *loci* with a few additions. Here we will review the occurrences as yet identified by critics and will try to emphasize the place of echoes of the *Metamorphoses* in the narrative tissue of the poem and how they have been included.

In (a) the image of Iris is used to praise the magnificence of the Roman aqueduct, so tall that even she would have struggled to lift the rain to that height: vv. 97-98 *Quid loquar aereo pendentes fornice rivos, / qua vix imbriferas tolleret Iris aquas*? This evokes the Ovidian scene of the divine deluge, where Iris absorbs the clouds to create the rain: *met. I. 270-271: nuntia Iunonis varios induta colores / concipit Iris aquas alimentaue nubibus adfert*. Our examination of Rutilius' poem draws attention to another reference to Ovid which confirms Doblhofer's notations: Rutilius' v. 99 *hos potius dicas crevisse in sidera montes* does indeed seem to echo *met. I. 153 altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montes*. Here Rutilius continues the description of the aqueduct's arches, comparing them to the mountains piled up by the giants to fight against the Olympians. The battle of the giants is in *met. I. 151-162*; Rutilius echoes Ovid's scene and ends the verse with the same words, but the result is different because he uses the image (v. 100 *tale Giganteum Graecia laudet opus*) to allude to Greek architectural art, decontextualizing the hypotext and giving his

¹¹ This is the text printed by Vessereau-Préchat 1961² based on the *editio princeps*; Wolff 2007 adopts the *lectio* from the manuscripts: *necare*. See also Wolff 2006, pp. 263-264.

¹² However this verse is refuted by Tarrant 2004.

verse an epic *allure*.¹³ Here the use of Ovidian reference seems to emerge in single fragments, not as a coherent and deep reflection of it. As we've just recalled, Rutilius quotes Ovid's verses of *Tristia* to colour his feelings on abandoning Rome and to put his journey in the same idealized line as that of Ovid's experience and exile. In this elegiac framework, where the presence of the epic is really limited to lexical elements – juxtaposed echoes of different passages from the epic – the use of the *Metamorphoses* is less evident and hidden in the fabric of the text, as for example in these cases:

I. 17 *quale per aetherios mundani verticis axes ~ met. vi. 174-175 maximus Atlas / est avus, aetherium qui fert cervicibus axem*¹⁴

I. 151 *ipse triumphali redimitus arundine Thybris ~ met. ix. 3 coepit, inornatos redimitus harundine crines* (cf. Doblhofer 1977, p. 88)

I. 230 *Qui pastorali cornua fronte gerit ~ met. xv. 596 cornua fronte gerit; quem vobis indicat augur*¹⁵

I. 235 *dum renovat largo mortalia semina fetu ~ met. iii. 105 spargit humi iussos, mortalia semina, dentes* (cf. Castorina 1967, p. 176; Doblhofer 1977, p. 123)

I. 251 *non illic gustu latices vitiantur amaro ~ met. xv. 286 qui fuerat dulcis, salibus vitiatur amaris?* (cf. Doblhofer 1977, p. 129)

I. 410 *grandia consumpsit moenia tempus edax ~ met. xv. 234 tempus edax rerum, tuque, invidiosa vetustas*. The *iunctura* is typically Ovidian, cf. also *Pont. iv. 10. 7* (cf. Castorina 1967, p. 204 who listed only this last quotation and Doblhofer 1977, p. 192)¹⁶

II. 39 *iam tum multiplici meruit munimine cingi ~ met. xiii. 212 hostibus insidior, fossas munimine cingo*¹⁷

¹³ For this verse Doblhofer 1977 marks a sort of *color Ovidianus* recalling *Ov. fast. v. 555*.

¹⁴ Doblhofer 1977, p. 27 recalls this *locus* with *fast. 3. 368* and *Lucan. i. 56-59*.

¹⁵ Referring to this verse Doblhofer 1977, pp. 121-122 mentions as parallels *Ov. trist. i. 1. 8* (*cornua fronte geras*); 110 (*fronte geret*); moreover for the *iunctura cornua fronte* he recalls *Verg. georg. iv. 299*; *Ov. fast. v. 606*; *hal. 3* and *met. xv. 596*. Here, according our thinking, Rutilius echoes only this last parallel introducing the entire second hemistich of the hexameter, but always without other semantic links with the text of the *Metamorphoses*.

¹⁶ *Tempus edax* also recurs in *Sen. epigr. 1. 1* and *CLE 1109. 46*.

¹⁷ Castorina 1967, p. 241. Doblhofer 1977, p. 272 doesn't list *Lucan. iii. 377*

The second occurrence (b) pointed out by Vessereau shows how Rutilius sometimes juxtaposes various Ovidian lexical elements in a single verse. In the final part of the hymn to Rome, the poem relates the beginning of his voyage by sea (v. 156 *temperet aequoream dux Cytherea viam*) echoing the Ovidian epic image of *met.* XII. 94 (*Nereaque et natas et totum temperat aequor*) and combines it with *her.* 19. 160 (*sternet et aequoreas, aequore nata, vias*), applying the verb *temperare* to *aequor*, but without copying the model.¹⁸ Similarly, Rutilius echoes *Ov. met.* II. 117 in I. 433 (d), but here the image is broadly applied to the same context of astronomy (i.e. the moon's alteration and rotation).

All these examples show that the presence of the *Metamorphoses* is marginal and not exclusive, limited to metrical structure or to generic suggestions taken from different books by Ovid, really like pieces of a puzzle put together without any relevance in the narration. Nevertheless, if we analyse the *loci* of the *Metamorphoses* listed by Vessereau and by the critics in their commentaries, we can identify some examples that permit us to identify a different kind of intertextuality. Vessereau's instance (c) does not at first appear to be supported by textual evidence. The passage concerns the port of *Centocellae* and the poet mentions the small artificial island (*insula facta*): vv. 239-242 *molibus aequoreum concluditur amphitheatrum / angustosque aditus insula facta tegit. / Attollit geminas turres bifidoque meatu / faucibus artatis pandit utrumque latus*. Doblhofer 1977, p. 126 (like Castorina 1967, p. 178) following Vessereau's list, cites as a parallel *met.* XI. 728-730: *adiacet undis / facta manu moles, quae primas aequoris iras / frangit et incursus quae praedelassat aquarum*. The only elements these passages have in common are the image of an artificial bay described as *facta* (*facta manu* in Ovid) and the use of the noun *moles*. The noun could create proximity between Rutilius' verses and Ovid's passage (instead of the other possible hypotext: Verg. *Aen.* I. 159-161¹⁹). It is possible that Rutilius had Ovid *met.* XI. 728-730 in mind here, but if there is a reference to Ovid,

where there is the only previous occurrence of the same phrase. Tarrant 2004 prints *fossa munimina*, cf. *ad loc.*

¹⁸ Doblhofer 1977, p. 92 recalls also *Hor. carm.* IV. 12. 1.

¹⁹ *Est in secessu longo locus: insula portum / efficit obiectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto / frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.*

on the one hand, its effect on the lexical construction of the verse is marginal, and on the other it involves vv. 239-240 and not only v. 240, as in Vessereau's and Doblhofer's lists. In this case there is neither a repetition of a single fragment, nor a real specific instance of copying, but a general echo and reference because of the image that Rutilius has to describe, pointed out only by the choice of the noun *moles*. Moreover, references to other epics seem to overlap in Rutilius and – of Verg. *Aen.* I. 159-161, Ovid's verses and Lucan. II. 613-615 (*hanc latus angustum iam se cogentis in artum / Hesperiae tenuem producit in aequora linguam, / Hadriacas flexis claudit quae cornibus undas*) – Lucan is perhaps the more evident hypotext here. Doblhofer 1977, pp. 125-126 does not consider either model to be dominant, nor does he analyse the poetical treatment of the verses. He merely references Lucan's passage in the commentary and then, for v. 240, Virgil and Ovid. The impression that we are left with is that the poet marks the combination of different epic models in this passage by introducing a lexical element taken from Ovid (*molibus* is an echo of *met.* XI. 729) in the *incipit* of the couplet (vv. 239-240). Then at v. 240 he develops his description alluding more than once to Lucan's passage, of which we also see a trace in the couplet 241-242, specifically in the noun *latus* at the end of v. 242.

Another sequence shows a similar poetic solution: in vv. 346-350 Rutilius describes a pause in the journey because of bad sea conditions. The tale of this stop along the river Ombrone offers Rutilius a pretext for a brief digression about the place where he and his companions make camp. The vv. 345-348 *litorea noctis requiem metamur arena; / dat vespertinos myrtea silva focos. / Parvula subiectis facimus tentoria remis, / transversus subito culmine contus erat* are based on epic and poetic patterns. Rutilius seems to blend echoes of Virgil and Ovid, as we can see in v. 346, which recalls *met.* XI. 234 (*myrtea silva subest bicoloribus obsita baxis*) and also Verg. *Aen.* VI. 443-444 (*secreti celant calles et myrtea circum / silva tegit*). Doblhofer 1977, pp. 160-161, also points out Ov. *am.* I. 1. 29 (*cingere litorea flaventia tempora myrto*) and Mart. IV. 13. 6 (*nec plus lotos aquas, litora myrtus amat*) perhaps in this last quotation thinking of Martial's influence on the *incipit* of v. 345. The influence of the passage containing *met.* XI. 234 is stronger and more extended than might appear at first, and

can be perceived in the construction of Rutilius's *tableau* in its entirety (vv. 335-350: cf. *met.* XI. 231-236 *portus erat; summis inductum est aequor harenis. / Litus habet solidum, quod nec vestigia servet / nec remoretur iter nec opertum pendeat alga. / Myrtea silva subest bicoloribus obsita bacis; / est specus in medio (natura factus an arte, / ambiguum, magis arte tamen), quo saepe venire*; in particular, the short description of the port may also have influenced the description of vv. 240-243 where, as we have seen above, the poet introduces repetitions from vv. 728-730 of the same book by Ovid. Other Ovidian echoes are combined at v. 345 (*litorea noctis requiem metamur arena*) where Rutilius recalls *met.* XV. 725 (*litoream tractu squamae crepitantis harenam*²⁰). In addition we can emphasize how Rutilius opens the new sequence (vv. 349-371) of his narrative with the syntagm *lux aderat* (v. 349) in the same metrical position as in *Ov. fast.* IV. 333 and also in *Sil.* IV. 89.

For Vessereau's *loci* (e) and (f) we can see a similar intertwining of Ovidian echoes. After the small encomium of Pisa, Rutilius talks about the hunting trip in Villa Triturrita (vv. 615-630) and his description focuses on a large boar that would be too strong even for Meleager and Hercules: vv. 625-628 *funditur insidiis et rara fraude plagarum / terribilisque cadit fulmine dentis aper, / quem Meleagrei vereantur adire lacerti, / qui laxet nodos Amphitryoniadae*. This mythological reference seems to allude to the Ovidian tale in *met.* VIII. 270-444 and the sequence has some influence on Rutilius' *tableau*: for v. 626 *terribilisque cadit fulmine dentis aper* Doblhofer 1977, p. 256 recalls *met.* VIII. 289 *fulmen ab ore venit, frondes adflatibus ardent* dealing with the Calidonian boar. Furthermore Rutilius combines the *loci* indicated by Vessereau (and included in Doblhofer's commentary), i.e. *met.* I. 305 *nec vires fulminis apro* and X. 550 *fulmen habent acres in aduncis dentibus apri*, with other repetitions from the epic.²¹ While all these echoes are limited to single lexical elements, *met.* VIII seems to influence Rutilius in a quite different way. Meleager's story is indeed referenced in the second book of the *de*

²⁰ Cf. Doblhofer 1977, p. 160, but the syntagm *litorea harena* also occurs in Lucan. IX. 296, 441.

²¹ Cf. Doblhofer 1977, pp. 256-257. The same occurrences are listed in the commentary on v. 626 by Castorina 1967, p. 232.

reditu, where, at the end of the invective against Stilicho, Rutilius introduces vv. 53-54 which refer to Althea, Meleager's mother. The tale is placed in a brief sequence where Rutilius emphasizes the treachery of the *proditor Stilicho* by comparing his crimes against Rome, the mother of the world, to the most familiar execrable crimes: Althea, who murdered her son; Scilla, who caused the death of her father; and Nero, who murdered his mother. This crime is compared with Stilicho's destruction of the *Libri Sybillini*, demonstrating wickedness that surpassed even Nero's (II. 51-60).²² The reference to Ovid in the final part of the invective against Stilicho is not limited to the analogy in mythological content, but emerges in the details. Rut. Nam. II. 53 *odimus Althaeam consumpti funere torris*, noted by Vesserau (h), recalls Ovid's tale in *met.* VIII. 445-532. Ovid marks Althea's fatal choice with an exclamation: vv. 497-498 *pereat sceleratus* (scil. *Meleager*) *et ille / spemque patris regnumque trahat patriaeque ruinam*, where may be where Rutilius found the image of the death of the *sceleratus* protagonist and the ruin of the reign, both combined in an invective in a tale of a crime between blood relations. The selection of the *exempla* given here by Rutilius is based on *met.* VIII, which begins with the tale of Nisus and Scilla. Doblhofer 1977, p. 281, like the other critics, recalls *met.* VIII. 8-10 (and *Ciris* 120-125), but the *iunctura crinis Nisaeus* in Rutilius' v. 54: *Nisaeum crinem flere putantur aves* seems to us to recall Nemes. *cyn.* 44 *non crinem Nisi, non saevae pocula Circes*. Rutilius synthesizes the Ovidian stories in a compact sequence whose purpose is to compare Nero and Stilicho.

Garth Tissol has pointed out the parallel between Nisus' purple lock of hair and the Sybilline books as talismans and has proposed a comparison between Althea and Stilicho, explaining Stilicho's violence against Rome as 'a reversal – vastly more monstrous – of Althea's act, in which a mother destroys a son.'²³ According to Tissol the influence of *met.* VIII is mediated by

²² *Nec tantum Geticis grassatus proditor armis: / ante Sibyllinae fata cremavit opis. / Odimus Althaeam consumpti funere torris, / Nisaeum crinem flere putantur aves; / at Stilicho aeterni fatalia pignora regni / et plenas voluit praecipitare colos. / Omnia Tartarei cessent tormenta Neronis; / consumat Stygias tristior umbra faces. / Hic immortalem, mortalem perculit ille, / hic mundi matrem perculit, ille suam.*

²³ Cf. Tissol 2002, p. 445.

trist. I. 7. 15-20, (where Ovid compares himself to Althea for his attempt to burn the *Metamorphoses*). The aim of Tissol's article is to point out the key role of Ovidian exilic poems in mediating Rutilius' reference to the *Metamorphoses*: 'For readers of the *Tristia*, Ovid's own version of Althea's story in the *Metamorphoses* had become standard (*Met.* VIII. 445-525); it remained so for Rutilius's readers. The allusion to Althea in the context of book burning opens a view to this story through Ovid's allusion in the *Tristia*. Hence Rutilius's reference to the *Metamorphoses*, like his reference to Homer through the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, is mediated by Ovid's exilic poetry and contributes to his larger vision of his journey as that of a latter-day Ovidian exile.'²⁴ Based on Vessereau's list, the commentaries – especially Doblhofer's – and our examination of the poem, Rutilius does not seem to mediate the references to the *Metamorphoses* through Ovid's poetry in exile, but instead combines them. Moreover, as we have just seen, echoes, repetitions and influences of the *Metamorphoses* are often intertwined with other epic models and their presence is not always dominant or exclusive. If we return to the last section of the first book, we can find other evidence of this.

In instance (f) Vessereau was the first to detect an Ovidian echo in Rut. Nam. I. 631-632 *interea madidis non desinit Africus alis / continuos picea nube negare*²⁵ *dies ~ met.* I. 264-265 *madidis Notus evolat alis, / terribilem picea tectus caligine vultum*, followed by Castorina²⁶ and other critics. Doblhofer added Ov. *met.* XI. 549 *fervet, et inducta piceis e nubibus umbra* as a possible model for the *iunctura picea nube*.²⁷ Here Ov. *met.* I. 631-632 is the most relevant poetic reference in terms of context and the Ovidian verses that introduce the scene of the deluge give an epic tone to the ending of Rutilius's first book. These last verses show the same approach as *trist.* I. 1 and Ovid is present in the prevalent echoes of the poems from exile. At v. 636 *quo madidam nullus navita linquit humum* there is an echo of Ov.

²⁴ Cf. Tissol 2002, p. 446.

²⁵ Cf. n. 11.

²⁶ Cf. p. 233 Castorina comments: 'evidente l'imitazione da Ov. *met.* I. 264-265'.

²⁷ We can remember also *her.* 19. 122 *et latet obscura condita nube dies*, where Ovid employs a similar image.

am. II. 16. 10,²⁸ while at v. 639 *vidimus excitis pontum flavescere arenis* Rutilius seems to combine together *met.* v. 560 (*vidistis vestros subitis flavescere pennis*) and ix. 36 (*inque vicem fulvae tactu flavescit harenae*). The words *flavescit harenae* also recall Sil. I. 159 and, according to Fo 1992, p. 120, the entire section may recall Sil. III. 45-54. Vv. 639-643 are well analysed in detail by Doblhofer 1977, p. 261, who lists Ov. *Pont.* II. 10. 23 and *met.* XI. 497-501 in his commentary. The epic tone of the whole end of the first book is moreover broadly moulded upon Lucan. I. 409-417.²⁹

If the strong presence of Ovid's elegiac, as argued by the critics, closes the book in a kind of *Ringkomposition* confirming a concrete alignment with the feelings and story of Ovid's exile, the model of the *Metamorphoses* provides Rutilius with many phrases and *iuncturae* and also the mythological background and characters. The very limited use of the *Metamorphoses* is really apparent and all of Rutilius' poem shows a continuity in the way it proceeds to select and employ passages from Ovid's epic. Considering especially the first book, the echoes of the *Metamorphoses* are limited to the sections where the context requests an exalted tone that the elegiac model cannot provide. Étienne Wolff has observed that Rutilius uses Ovid's *Metamorphoses* especially in the sections where there is an etiological development in the plot and where the focus is on the *antiquités romaines*, for example at I. 229-236 (i.e. the stop at *Castrum* and the description of the statue of Inuo); 255-268 (the *Thermae Taurinae*); 287-292 (the abandoning of *Cosa*); 435-438 (the discovery of Corsica). Nevertheless in these sections the presence of the *Metamorphoses* is often hidden or marginal, as in vv. 261-262,³⁰ in vv. 435-438 (except v. 435 *haec ponti brevis auxit mendacia famae* which recalls Ov. *fast.* IV. 311 *conscia mens recti famae mendacia risit*, cf. Doblhofer 1977, p. 200) and in the pericope with the brief digression on the god *Inou* where Rutilius recalls, especially in v. 236 (*finigitur in Venerem pronior esse deus*), *met.* VI. 459-460 (*exstimulat*,

²⁸ Quoted by Castorina 1967, p. 234.

²⁹ Cf. Doblhofer 1977, p. 260.

³⁰ Castorina 1967, p. 181, comments: 'nessun riferimento letterale ai famosi brani sul ratto di Europa (Hor. *carm.* III. 27, 25-76; Ov. *met.* II. 846-875)'.

pronusque genus regionibus illis / in Venerem est) and *fast.* I. 397 (*Panes et in Venerem Satyrorum prona iuventus*).³¹

Generally speaking we cannot observe a true absence of the *Metamorphoses*: Rutilius combines different verse endings and *iuncturae*, often imitating Ovidian metrical structure and echoing passages of the *Metamorphoses* not always chosen for their similarity to the new context. In the general set-up of the poem the Ovidian epic model is hidden and emerges manifestly only sporadically, often overlapping other epic models. Rutilius doesn't systematically and precisely follow passages of the *Metamorphoses* except for books VIII and XI, which seem to be more systematically echoed in brief sequences. On the whole, what comes to light is Rutilius' poetic tendency to intermingle different echoes in a sort of puzzle where 'fragments' of the *Metamorphoses*, interlaced with other quotations and references, bring the work to a stylistically higher level.

The Presence of the Metamorphoses in Sidonius Apollinaris and Alcimus Avitus

Starting with Sidonius' use of the *Metamorphoses* we will focus our attention on two aspects: firstly, on elements copied from *met.* II and secondly, especially on the panegyric on Eparchius Avitus (*carm.* 7). Robert Colton, in his study on the literary influences on Sidonius Apollinaris' works, includes a chapter about Ovid's *Metamorphoses* inspired by Geisler's list of *loci similes*.³² Colton mentions Sidon. *carm.* 9. 269-279 and 23. 158-161, where the author refers to Ovid's banishment to Tomis, and also *epist.* II. 10. 6, where Ovid and Corinna are listed together in a textual passage which catalogues the most famous couples of poets and their lovers. Sidonius thus recalls Ovid anecdotally, without any apparent interest in his verses. As a matter of fact, leafing through Geisler's index and Colton's pages, our initial impression is that the presence of the *Metamorphoses* is quantifiably limited both in letters and in *carmina*. However, if Rutilius does not systemati-

³¹ About this section and its content see Lana 1961, pp. 115-116, Castorina 1967, pp. 176-177 and Doblhofer 1977, p. 123.

³² Geisler 1887, Colton 2000, pp. 136-162.

cally refer to specific poetic sequences in their entirety, Sidonius by contrast recalls above all *met.* 11 and the complete Ovidian *tableaux* in general. The quotations and the echoes from this book are not limited to lexical and metrical features but influence the structure of Sidonius' text and his narrative processes.

Like Ausonius, Claudian and Rutilius, Sidonius uses his literary sources and hypotexts in two main ways: quotations *ad verbum* and allusions hidden in the fabric of the intertextual references, as is typical of his elaborate style.³³ Apart from this, Sidonius follows especially authors such as Ausonius and Claudian,³⁴ who gives him the poetical example of the fusion, rewriting and interpretation of classical models. The references to Ovidian poems and especially to the *Metamorphoses* follow this poetic pattern. Therefore, unlike in Rutilius, some repetitions and echoes are mediated by other hypotexts and have a structural function.

The first panegyric composed and recited (AD 456) by Sidonius in honour of the *princeps* Eparchius Avitus gives us an example of these different kinds of use of Ovidian verses. An analysis of the text shows a prevalence of echoes of Ovid's elegiac poems, whereas the *Metamorphoses* have less influence³⁵ than Virgil, Statius and Claudian. This last is the most important poetical reference for Sidonius as a panegyrist; the structure of *carm.* 7 may suffice to demonstrate this. Sidonius' poem starts with a *concilium deorum* called by Iuppiter to decide the fate of the world (vv. 17-44). At the beginning of the divine assembly the prosopopoeia of Rome appears, described as a *dea fessa*, old, without traces of the ancient triumphs (vv. 45-49).³⁶ Rome implores Jupiter to give her a new Trajan able to restore her ancient power,

³³ On this 'jeweled style', see Roberts 1989. For a complete study of Sidonius' style see Loyen 1943, Gualandri 1979 (especially about the letters); Consolino 1974 and Condorelli 2008 (about the poems).

³⁴ Cf. La Penna 1995.

³⁵ Here we will give some examples of Ovid's influence, taken from our forthcoming commentary on *carm.* 7, to be published as part of the SAXxi project 'Sidonius Apollinaris for the 21st Century'. An analysis of Ovid's presence in the preface (*carm.* 6) is in Bruzzone 2014; for a study of this *carmen* see also Furbetta 2010-2011.

³⁶ On the features of the prosopopoeias introduced in Sidonius' poems, see Bonjour 1982. On the characterization of *dea Roma*, Consolino 2014.

which she recalls in her speech mentioning the salient events of her glorious past (vv. 50-118). Jupiter's answer is meant to introduce the dedicatee, and so in the poetical fiction the panegyric of Avitus is recited by the father of the gods, who becomes the poet's *alter ego*. Finally, Jupiter exhorts Rome to leave her *turpe veternum* (v. 596), because Avitus, *senex princeps*, will give her a new *iuventa* (vv. 595-598). This framework and the topical epic *cliché* of *concilium deorum*, with the dialogue between Jupiter and Rome's prosopopoeia,³⁷ are developed by Sidonius following the scheme of Claudian's *De bello Gildonico*,³⁸ but the development of the plot and the *tableaux* aren't modelled upon Claudian alone. The fabric of the poem reveals an interlacement of images and references drawn from the literary tradition – especially Virgil and Statius – with some scattered echoes borrowed from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The lexical quotations from *Metamorphoses* listed by Geisler 1887 include:

carm. 7. 35 (*Perseius harpe*) ~ *met.* v. 69

carm. 7. 581 (*Tirynthius heros*) ~ *met.* VII. 410; *fast.* II. 349

In contrast to other elements copied from this Ovidian poem³⁹ these two *iuncturae* overlap other hypotexts and cannot be attributed with certainty to the *Metamorphoses*. The *iunctura Tirynthius heros* referring to Hercules in the epic and in end of the verse is also in Stat. *Theb.* VI. 489; Val. Fl. II. 373; Sil. VIII. 217. *Perseius harpe* reveals a precise debt linked to the details of a mythological tale, because Sidonius uses the noun *harpe* that recalls the form and the context (Medusa's murder by Perseus) of *met.* v. 69 (*vertit in hunc harpen spectatam caede Maedusae*). Nevertheless the reference to Ovid is combined with another literary reference: the adjective Perseius was used by Stat. *Theb.* III. 441 before Sidonius,

³⁷ On the presence of epic features in the Claudian's epideictic see Fo 1982 and Gualandri 1968; Schindler 2009, 59-172. For the use of the *concilium deorum* in the verse panegyric, Bruzzone 2004.

³⁸ Claudian's *carmen* also inspires the characterization of *Africa's prosopopoeia* in Sidon. *carm.* 5. 53-56 (panegyric on Majorian). On the importance of the *De bello Gildonico* and the assimilation of Avitus to Trajan in Sidonius' political message see Brocca 2003-2004.

³⁹ Cf. e.g. Sidon. *carm.* 7. 30 (*pharetrata Diana*) ~ Ov. *am.* I. 1. 10; *her.* 20. 206; Sidon. *carm.* 7. 200 (*Cressa*) ~ Ov. *her.* 4. 2.

and the *iunctura*: *Tirynthius heros* may echo Ov. *met.* v. 1 and *am.* III. 6. 13, where Perseus is called *Danaeius heros*, in the same metrical position.

The presence of the *Metamorphoses* in Sidon. *carm.* 7 and in his texts in general is not limited to lexical analogies. Sidonius seems to be employing a kind of broad intertextual link with the epic tone of Ovidian images and features, hidden in a deep layer of the narrative fabric. In some sections Ovid provides a suggestion that influences the whole text, not necessarily through precise lexical indications. We have an example of this process in the brief description of Iuno's reaction at the end of *dea Roma*'s speech and in the first part of Jupiter's answer. Sidonius focuses on the change in Iuno as she dismisses her *ira* of old towards Rome and her destiny: vv. 120-122 *assurgunt proceres, Mars, Cypris, Romulus et qui / auctores tibi, Roma, dei; iam mitior ipsa / flectitur atque iras veteres Saturnia donat*. Geisler 1887 lists as a *locus similis* Verg. *Aen.* XII. 178-179 *et tu Saturnia coniunx, / iam melior, iam, diva, precor*; but we argue that Sidonius' image here also broadly recalls *met.* II. 435 *aspiceres utinam, Saturnia: mitior esses* combined with the reference to *met.* XIV. 581-582 *iamque deos omnes ipsamque Aeneia virtus / Iunonem veteres finire coegerat iras*. This last Ovidian textual passage is well connected to the context and related to Iuno, Aeneas and the destiny of Roman power. Sidonius also emulates Ovid in the following vv. 123-124, where the father of the gods tells *Roma* that fate is above everyone, even Jupiter himself, and rules all events: *Iuppiter ista refert: Fatum, quo cuncta reguntur / quoque ego, non licuit frangi; sat celsa laborant*. This echoes Jupiter's speech in *met.* IX. 429-430 *quo ruitis? Tantumne aliquis sibi posse videtur / fata quoque ut superet?*; and 433-434 *vos etiam, quoque hoc animo meliore feratis, / me quoque fata regunt*.

The same tendency to make use of a whole passage from *met.* II is observed in *carm.* 7. Sidonius recalls the Ovidian narrative in the main section of the panegyric, i.e. at vv. 403-410, where he evokes the mission of Avitus at Toulouse to establish an alliance with the Goths. In vv. 403-404 Sidonius focuses on the feelings of the Gothic chiefs at Avitus' arrival (*obstupere duces pariter Scythicusque senatus / et timere suam pacem ne forte negaret*) and then introduces a comparison between Phoebus

and Avitus that is structured as a short digression on the myth of Phaethon (vv. 405-410):

Sic rutilus Phaethonta levem cum carperet axis,
iam pallente die flagrantique excita mundo
pax elementorum fureret vel sicca propinquus
saeviret per stagna vapor limusque sitiret
pulvereo ponti fundo, tunc unica Phoebi
insuetum clemens extinxit flamma calorem

The recourse to the same Ovidian episode is in Claud. *Hon. IV cons.* 62-70:

[...] velut ordine rupto
cum procul insanae traherent Phaethonta quadrigae
saeviretque dies terramque et stagna propinqui
haurirent radii, solito cum murmure torvus⁴⁰
Sol occurrit equis; qui postquam rursus eriles
agnovere sonos, rediit meliore magistro
machina contentusque poli, currusque recepit
imperium flammaeque modum

In *met.* II the scene is introduced by Phoebus' exhortation to Phaethon to renounce his insane idea of driving the sun's chariot. His last words to his son (v. 149 *Quae tutus spectes, sine me dare lumina terris*) are perhaps echoed by Sidonius in the end of v. 2 (cf. vv. 1-2 *Phoebe, peragrato tandem visurus in orbe / quem possis perferre parem, da lumina caelo*), where there is a comparison between the emperor and the sun, who gives its light to the earth. Ovid's narrative⁴¹ starts with the description of Phaethon on the chariot: vv. 150-152 *Occupat ille levem iuvenali corpore currum / statque super manibusque leves contingere habenas / gaudet et invito grates agit inde parenti*,⁴² which he repeats with little variation after the description of the sun's horses: vv. 161-162 *sed leve pondus erat nec quod cognoscere possent / Solis equi, solitaque iugum gravitate carebat*. These verses are echoed by Sidonius at

⁴⁰ Ed. Charlet 2000.

⁴¹ For a commentary on *met.* II see Bömer 1969, pp. 220-223, Ciappi 2000 and Barchiesi 2005.

⁴² At v. 151 Tarrant 2004 prints the *lectio: datas*, considering *leves* in the apparatus criticus to be probably correct.

v. 405 in the *iunctura levis Phaethon* and at v. 406, where Sidonius describes the day the way that Ovid describes Phaethon himself in *met.* II. 178-181 *ut vero summo despexit ab aethere terras*⁴³ / *infelix Phaethon penitus penitusque patentes / palluit et subito genua intremuere timore / suntque oculis tenebrae per tantum lumen obortae*. The detail of the darkened day, described with the same verb as in Ovid's verse, is suggested both by the image of the *tenebrae* that shadow Phaethon's eyes and by the description of *met.* II. 227-234 (*tum vero Phaethon cunctis e partibus orbem / aspicit accensum nec tantos sustinet aestus / ferventesque auras velut e fornace profunda / ore trahit currusque suos candescere sentit; / et neque iam cineres eiectatamque favillam / ferre potest calidoque involvitur undique fumo, / quoque eat, aut ubi sit picea caligine tectus / nescit*).

The same verses influence Sidonius' v. 406 and they are also used in Claudian's vv. 63-64. Sidonius seems to allude to Ovidian description echoing and combining both the oxymoronic image of the excessive light that blinds (v. 181) and the hyperbolic image of the mist covering the daylight (vv. 232-234). In vv. 407-409 Sidonius refers to the chaos in the burnt world and recapitulates the main topics of the long description in *met.* II. 207-217. The detail of the excessive heat that dries up all the water of earth and sea echoes *met.* II. 262-264. Sidonius introduces lexical fragments drawn from Ovid as if fitting together different pieces of a puzzle: *pulvereo fundo* (v. 409) recalls *met.* II. 255-256 (*ostia septem / pulverulenta vacant, septem sine flumine valles*) related to the Nile with its source and its mouth covered with the dust; *vapor* (v. 408) recalls *met.* II. 283 (*presserat ora vapor*) and v. 301 (*dixerat haec Tellus neque enim tolerare vaporem*) applied to the prosopopoeia of Tellus dried up, praying to Jupiter: cf. vv. 275-278 *sus-*

⁴³ This clause influences v. 17 of the panegyric, where Sidonius speaks of Jupiter: *Forte pater superum prospexit ab aethere terras*. Sidonius also echoes *met.* II. 323-324 (*quem procul a patria diverso maximus orbe / excipit Eridanus flagrantiaque abluit ora*) at the beginning of *concilium deorum* presenting the personification of the main rivers, as Eridanus: vv. 41-42 *sed senibus, residere loco, tibi, maxime fluctu / Eridane*. Another echo of *met.* II is recognizable at v. 354 (*collis Erythraei portans Phoebeius ales*) where Sidonius introduces the Phoenix to compare it with Avitus (who is followed by the barbarian allies as the Phoenix is by all birds, cf. vv. 353-356), where he echoes *met.* II. 544-545 (*sed ales / sensit adulterium Phoebeius, utque latentem*), though the *iunctura Phoebeius ales* is related in Ovid to the *cornix Phoebi*.

*tulit oppressos collo tenus arida vultus / opposuitque manum fronti magnoque tremore / omnia concutiens paulum subsedit et infra, / quam solet esse, fuit siccaque*⁴⁴ *ita voce locuta est* (*sicca* is also in Sidonius' v. 407). Sidonius, like Claudian at vv. 64-65, makes the chariot of the Sun the subject of the scene and similarly develops a comparison to equate the protagonist to Phoebus, who restores order to the world; in Ovid's narrative it is Jupiter who does so.⁴⁵ The meaning of Sidonius' vv. 409-410 explains the rule of Avitus, who (as the *unica Phoebi flamma*), with his *clementia* establishes the alliance with the Goths bringing peace to the empire and to the world. If the political meaning of the story of Phaethon is inspired by Claudian's panegyric, however, Sidonius' verses are patterned after Ovid in a play of interconnected cross-references to the hypotext, only partially mediated by Claudian's verses, where the model of the *Metamorphoses* is freely imitated. The image completes and develops Sidonius' words in the proem of the panegyric (vv. 1-3), completely superposing Phoebus/Sun and Avitus and thus involving a teleological interpretation of the empire and of power.⁴⁶

Sidonius also uses the tale of Phaethon in *carm.* 11 (epithalamium for Ruricius and Hiberia) and Stefania Filosini has previously shown the relevance of *met.* II as a model that significantly influences Sidonius' text, acting as a both stylistic and lexical reference for the structure and the plot of the text.⁴⁷ Sidonius describes the temple of Venus (vv. 14-33) following the model of *met.*

⁴⁴ Tarrant 2004 prints *fractaque*. In any case Sidonius' emulation of this passage is certain if we also accept Tarrant's choice.

⁴⁵ Loyer 1960, p. 185 n. 71 doesn't list Claudian's panegyric and mentions as a source only *met.* II. However, Claudian's influence here is undoubted, as we have just shown regarding this and vv. 347-356 in Furbetta 2014, pp. 75-81.

⁴⁶ On the teleological value of Sidonius' choices, especially in *carm.* 7, see Tommasi 2015.

⁴⁷ Cf. Filosini 2014a who proposes the following parallels: Sidonius' description of Venus' temple/palace (vv. 1-33) and the sea cortege (vv. 34-46) ~ *met.* II. 1-18 *ekphrasis* with the palace of the Sun and the picture on the doors with the Sea and his people; the dialogue between Venus and Amor (vv. 61-93) ~ *met.* II. 42-149 dialogue between Sun and Phaethon; description of Venus' chariot (vv. 93-107) ~ *met.* II. 103-124; 150-152 description of Sun's chariot; Venus' journey (vv. 111-123) ~ *met.* II. 153-209 Phaethon's journey. Rosati 2003 has argued a similar major influence on structural and lexical composition in the epithalamium for Polemius and Araneola (*carm.* 15), where Sidonius, in describing Araneola, recalls the figure of Ovidian Aracne in *met.* VI.

II. 1-18 on the palace of the Sun; Sidonius' *tableau* combines this passage of Ovid with the description of Venus' palace in Claud. *carm.* 10 (epithalamium for Honorius and Maria, vv. 85-91). According to Filosi's analysis the relevance of *met.* II can be seen for instance in Sidon. *carm.* 11. 14-15 *profecit studio spatium; nam Lemnius illic / ceu tempum lusit Veneri* which appears to be a tapestry of references taken from Claud. *carm.* 10. 87-88 *Lemnius haec etiam gemmis extruxit et auro / admiscens artem pretio* and Ov. *met.* II. 5-6 *materiam superabat opus nam Mulciber illic / aequora caelerat medias cingentia terras*. *Mulciber* is also repeated in vv. 29-31 *interiore loco simulavit Mulciber auro / exstantes late scopulos atque arte magistra / ingenti cultu naturae inculta fefellit* reaffirming the uninterrupted reference to and reuse of the same Ovidian hypotext, as in vv. 21-23, where Sidonius focuses on the doors of the palace and on its decorative stones, recalling Ovid's description of the decoration by Vulcanus of the palace of the sun.⁴⁸ For our purpose it is enough to consider these examples which show the great influence on Sidonius of the Phaethon episode which also inspires the description of Aurora's palace in the panegyric of Anthemius (*carm.* 2).

In this text Sidonius introduces an *ekphrasis* thoroughly analysed by Claudia Montuschi and Jean-Christophe Jolivet,⁴⁹ who have focused on the description of the prosopopoeia of Aurora and her palace, i.e. on the sections that come before the dialogue between the prosopopoeias of Rome and Aurora, where *Aurora* symbolizes the Orient which *Roma* asks to give her a new *princeps* to rule the *pars Occidentis*;⁵⁰ therefore Sidonius' choice is tied to the political situation, which he transposes in poetical fiction. So the *ekphrasis* doesn't appear disconnected from the context and Sidonius focuses on the description of the *Aurorae domus*, which intends to eulogize the Orient as the birthplace of Anthemius. Sidonius' vv. 405-435 are interlaced with citations from and echoes of *met.* II, as has been pointed out by the critics. Here the passage recalled is *met.* I. 778 and II. 1-30, which influences nar-

⁴⁸ The parallels proposed by Filosi 2014a are analysed in detail in Filosi 2014b, pp. 113-141.

⁴⁹ Montuschi 2001; Jolivet 2015.

⁵⁰ On Sidon. *carm.* 2 cf. Watson 1998.

rative temporal sequences of Sidonius' *tableau*.⁵¹ Montuschi has studied all the lexical influences of the *Metamorphoses*; here we cite by way of example:

vv. 405-406 *Ergo, sicut erat, liquidam transvecta per aethram / nascentis petiit tepidos Hyperionis ortus ~ met. I. 778-779 Aethiopasque suos positosque sub ignibus Indos / sidereis transit patriosque adit impiger ortus.*

v. 412 *balant rura rosis, indiscriptosque per agros ~ met. II. 113-114 purpureas Aurora fores et plena rosarum / atria; diffugiunt stellae, quarum agmina cogit*

vv. 417-418 *hinc rediviva petit vicinus cinnama Phoenix. / Hic domus Aurorae rutilo crustante metallo ~ met. XI. 593 mons cavus, ignavi domus et penetralia Somni ~ met. XV. 399-402 quassaque cum fulva substravit cinnama murra, / se super imponit finitque in odoribus aevum. / Inde ferunt, totidem qui vivere debeat annos, / corpore de patrio parvum phoenicea renasci.*

Sidonius' description brings back the traditional classical *topos* of *locus amoenus* that Christian poets normally apply to the description of Paradise, as does his relative Alcimus Avitus, who reuses both the *Metamorphoses* and its poetical reworking by Sidonius⁵² in the first book of his *de spiritalis historiae gestis*.⁵³ Arweiler 1999 has given special consideration to the influence of the *Metamorphoses* on books IV-V of Avitus' work, in a comprehensive section starting from Goelzer's inquiry.⁵⁴ Goelzer, analysing Peiper's quotations in the index of *loci similes*,⁵⁵ had focused on passages in which the Ovidian influence seems indeed to be nonexistent or too weak. Moreover he assigned particular value to Sidonius' poems mediating role. After Peiper's edition scholars recorded

⁵¹ Cf. Montuschi 2001, pp. 166-170. For a thorough analysis of temporal features in the Ovidian description of Aurora see Montuschi 1998a. A summary of the studies on how Ovid structures the narrative of the *Metamorphoses* through temporal periphrases is provided by Montuschi 1998b and Montuschi 2005, pp. 373-404.

⁵² For *met. I* and *II* on the relevance of Ovidian mythological episodes in Christian authors see Roberts 2002. For the presence of Ovid's exile poems in Christian authors see Fielding 2014.

⁵³ Avitus' text is quoted by Hecquet-Noti 1999.

⁵⁴ Arweiler 1999, pp. 232-237, Goelzer 1910.

⁵⁵ Cf. Peiper 1883, pp. 302-308.

an increasing number of Ovidian parallels and Costanza 1968 gave a complete list, also including those pointed out by Mani-tius and Losgar. All these lists give a quantifiable idea about the frequent presence of the *Metamorphoses* and the references to it in the poem, but without an analysis of their inclusion in the fabric of the poem. In addition, the latest critical edition by Nicole Hecquet-Noti, in the apparatus of *loci similes*, draws attention to many Ovidian passages, juxtaposed with several other authors that Avitus may be referencing, thus making it easier to view Avitus' texts as a patchwork. Limiting our observation to the reuse of Ovid, an examination of the text does indeed show a concentration of Ovidian passages in some brief poetic sequences that demonstrate a continual recourse to Ovid's epic poem, the use of which is based on a double tradition (profane and Christian), which gives preference to a selection of books and textual passages from the *Metamorphoses*, often mediated by authors such as Prudentius and Sidonius. Goelzer's prudent evaluation, partially rejected by the critics (except for Arweiler's study), is still quite valid: the presence of the *Metamorphoses* in many of the *loci* listed by the editors is not as weighty, univocal or decisive as to prove a truly uninterrupted recourse to Ovid. We will try to give some examples of this and our scope of observation will be the first book of Avitus' poem, where it is possible to give examples of the various poetic treatments of the Ovidian intertext. In vv. 69-77 Avitus speaks about the human form:

Quoque magis natura hominis sublimior extet,
accipiat rectos in caelum tollere vultus:
factorem quaerat proprium, cui mente fideli
impendat famulam longaevo in tempore vitam.
Haec ait et fragilem dignatus tangere terram
temperat umentem consperso in pulvere limum
orditurque novum dives Sapientia corpus.
Non aliter quam nunc opifex, cui est artis in usu
flectere laxatas per cuncta sequacia ceras

The critics have seen echoes of the *Metamorphoses* in this sequence. For vv. 69-70 Peiper points to *met.* 1. 85-86 *os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre / iussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus* as a model, which uses the same *iunctura tollere vultus* that, even before Avitus, recurs in Germ. *Arat.* 11; Costanza 1968,

p. 54, proposed a parallel between v. 68 *festinent trepidi consueta in vincla iuveni* and *met.* i. 124 *obruta sunt, pressique iugo gemuere iuveni*.⁵⁶ While this last case shows only one point of contact in the noun *iuveni* in the same metrical position, Morisi 1996 in his commentary points out an apparently more substantial allusion to the Ovidian context and emulation of it; for Avitus' vv. 73-79 Morisi 1996, p. 82, has argued that there is a general allusion to the image of Pigmalion described in *met.* x. Nicole Hecquet-Noti, probably drawing on his suggestion, includes the reference, without explanation, in her apparatus of *loci similes*. In this passage Morisi sees an imitation, based on the evocation of the same magical atmosphere linked to the creation of the statue and to the description of Pigmalion as a creator, and therefore a substantial reference to *met.* x. 283-286: *temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore / subsedit digitis ceditque, ut Hy-mettia sole / cera remollescit tractataque pollice multas / flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu*. In Avitus' text the core of the allusion to Ovid is constructed through the choice of the word *opifex* in v. 76. It appears in the same metrical position and in a similar context at the end of Avitus' verse (*est artis in usu*) and in *met.* x. 286 (*fit utilis usu*). Finally in v. 77 there is the image of the wax and the use of the verb *flecto*.

In the same pericope Peiper had detected an echo of *met.* i. 79: *ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo*, which is placed in the section on the world and human creation. An examination of these verses shows how Avitus here combines different poetical references taken from Christian poems; for example Mar. Vict. *aleth.* ii. 523: *humanos pollens opifex formavit in usus* is combined with a souvenir from Prud. *ham.* 116-119, from the same context: *ipse opifex mundi, terram mare sidera fecit / condidit ipse hominem, lutulenta et membra coegit / effigians quod morbus edat, quod crimine multo / sordeat, informi tumulus quod tabe resolvat*. In these hypotexts Avitus finds brief sequences (pertaining to the same biblical episodes), where the Ovidian model is present in the fabric of the poem. Nevertheless Avitus,

⁵⁶ Morisi 1996, p. 79 recalls Ovid's verses as parallels, especially for the same usage of alliteration and for the 'collisione parafonica *imperium iumenta*'. On Alcimus Avitus' poetics in general see Roncoroni 1972.

like Rutilius and Sidonius, clearly shows his debt to the Ovidian epic by copying some specific elements in brief narrative sequences. These include phrases appearing at the end of verses (cf. v. 69 *tollere vultus*), lexical features and images (i.e. the shaping of the wax in v. 77). These fragments reveal the reuse of Ovid on two levels: mediated by Christian authors and based on the school-tradition, where features of the Ovidian epic – linked to the best-known myths – survive through Christian semantic re-adaptation.⁵⁷ The selection from *Metamorphoses* focuses on precise tableaux. Like the passage listed by Costanza 1968, p. 53,⁵⁸ the passage I. 32-34 *elatae in altum volucres motuque citato / pendentes secuere vias et in aere sudo / praepetibus librant membrorum pondera pinnis*, shows echoes of *met.* I. 75 (*terra feras cepit, volucres agitabilis aer*) and, according to Hecquet-Noti, also recalls *met.* VIII. 200-202 (*postquam manus ultima coepto / imposita est, geminas opifex libravit in alas / ipse suum corpus motaque pendit in aura*).⁵⁹ A few verses later Avitus echoes *met.* I. 78 *natus homo est, sive hunc divino semine fecit* (belonging to the same Ovidian pericope quoted above) in I. 56 *nunc homo formetur, summi quem tangat imago* and then follows the same model in I. 59 *hunc libet erectum vultu praeponere pronis*, where he also combines other echoes from *met.* I. 84-86 (*pronaque cum spectent animalia cetera terram, / os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre / iussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*) used more explicitly (as we have just seen) in I. 70. The poet thus seems to emulate and reuse *met.* I. 75-86, combining and overlapping other hypotexts (especially Virgil⁶⁰) and other fragments from the *Metamorphoses*, as he does in I. 34, where he blends *met.* VIII. 200-202, Prud. *ham.* 535; Verg. *Aen.* III. 361.⁶¹

⁵⁷ An example of this tendency could also be I. 7 *ascribam tibi, prime pater, qui semine mortis*, which is repeated and amplified in v. 289 *semine mortali genitum terraeque reductum*, both influenced by *met.* III. 105 *spargit humi iussos, mortalia semina, dentes*, an Ovidian passage well known for the *iunctura mortalia semina* (very adaptable by Christians) and, for instance, echoed by Rut. Nam. I. 235 *dum renovat largo mortalia semina fetu*.

⁵⁸ See above, p. 313.

⁵⁹ Cf. Hecquet-Noti 1999, p. 130 (apparatus) and p. 131, n. 5.

⁶⁰ Virgil's presence is analysed by Simonetti Abbolito 1982; on this passage see Morisi 1996, pp. 81-84.

⁶¹ Cf. Hecquet-Noti 1999, p. 130 (apparatus).

The use of Ovidian patterns and features in Avitus' poems is continuous and coherent; in this regard we need only mention the *loci* from the first book pointed out by Costanza 1968 and Nicole Hecquet-Noti in her edition:

I. 14 *iam pater omnipotens librantis pondere verbi ~ met. I. 13 ponderibus librata suis nec brachia longo*

I. 117 *visceribus mediis traxerunt ossa medullas ~ met. I. 473 laesit Apollineas traiecta per ossa medullas*⁶²

I. 227 *perpetuo viret omne solum terraeque tepentis ~ met.*

I. 107 *ver erat aeternum, placidique tepentibus auris*

The analogy is limited to metrical and lexical features without a major influence on the development of the narrative. Rather, some of these reveal an allusion, a kind of dialogue between the poet and his hypotext, manifested in the text as an Ovidian colouration of the *ensemble*, perceivable for an educated reader, liberally reused in the fabric of the poem and far from a slavish emulation:

I. 279-283 *regreditur Nilus sparsasque recolligit undas, / fit fluuius pereunte lacu: tum redditur alveo / pristina riparum conclusis fluctibus obex, / donec dividuum spargens per devia finem / gurgite septeno patulum percurrat in aequor ~ met.*

I. 423-429 *Nilus et antiquo sua flumina reddidit alveo / aetherioque recens exarsit sidere limus, / plurima cultores versis animalia glaebis / inveniunt; et in his quaedam perfecta per ipsum / nascendi spatium, quaedam modo coepta suisque / trunca vident numeris, et eodem in corpore saepe / altera pars vivit, rudis est pars altera tellus.*⁶³

The first book also exemplifies how Avitus sometimes makes use of 'second-hand' references to Ovid's verses, mediated by other hypotexts. The description of Paradise as a *locus amoenus* is a mosaic interlaced with topical epic images taken from *met.* II and Sidonius' panegyric of Anthemius, which we have just considered. We mention only vv. 193-199:

⁶² The same clause occurs in Drac. *laud.* II. 41; *Romul.* 5. 128.

⁶³ Where Nilus also seems an echo of Lucan. VIII. 445 as pointed out in Hecquet-Noti's apparatus.

Est locus eoo mundi servatus in axe
secretis, natura, tuis, ubi solis ab ortu
vicinos nascens aurora repercutit Indos.
Hic gens ardentem caeli subteriacet axem,
quam candor fervens albenti ex aethere fuscet.
His semper lux pura venit caeloque propinquo
nativam servant nigrantia corpora noctem.

where the main hypotext is Sidon. *carm.* 2. 407-411:

Est locus Oceani, longinquis proximus Indis,
axe sub Eoo, Nabataeum tensus in Eurum;⁶⁴
ver ibi continuum est, interpellata nec ullis
frigoribus pallescit humus, sed flore perenni
picta peregrinos ignorant arva rigores

There are also traces of this passage in Alc. Avit. *carm.* 1. 218-219 (*non hic alterni succedit temporis umquam / bruma nec aestivi redeunt post frigora soles* ~ Sidon. *carm.* 2. 409-411); and in v. 222 (*hic ver adsidium caeli clementia servat*); where the echo of *met.* 1. 107 is used again by Sidon. *carm.* 2. 409 (cf. *supra*). Another example of Sidonius' influence is in Avitus' vv. 243-246 *renovatur corporis aetas / incensamque levant exordia crebra senectam. / Illic desudans fragrantia balsama ramus / perpetuum pingui promit de stipite fluxum*, where there is an echo of Sidonius (*carm.* 2. 417 *hinc rediviva petit vicinus cinnama Phoenix*), who in the same passage uses Lactantius' *Phoen.* and then Claud. *carm. min.* 27. Avitus reuses Sidonius' *tableau* with minimal variation, and the references to Ovid combined in Sidonius' *ekphrasis domus Aurorae*, permeate Avitus' description of Paradise along with other echoes from *met.* 11.⁶⁵ Thus, for Avitus, Sidonius' compact and valuable *ekphrasis* is the poetic model that is most pertinent and easy adaptable to the context. In transferring and adapting Ovid's description of *regia Solis* in *met.* 11 to a *locus amoenus* that is home to *Aurora*, symbol of life, light and the Orient, Sidonius becomes a useful model for giving an epic tone to Avitus' verses

⁶⁴ See also, a few verses later, Sidon. *carm.* 2. 347 *axe meo natum, confestim fregit in illo*.

⁶⁵ Cf. Ov. *met.* 11. 112-113 *perspicit, ecce vigil nitido patefecit ab ortu / purpureas Aurora fores et plena rosarum* ~ Alc. Avit. *carm.* 1. 194-195; cf. Hecquet-Noti 1999 (apparatus), p. 154.

and for topical description of *locus amoenus* interlaced with literary echoes and removed from its pagan atmosphere and meaning. So Avitus indirectly applies the characterization of the *domus Aurorae*, based on Ovid's *met.* II, to the condition of the first humans in Eden, through echoes of Lactantius' *de ave Phoenix* and others (like e.g. Virgil) well incorporated and mediated by Sidonius' sequence, directly imitated here.

These examples suffice to show the extended usage of Ovidian hypotext in Avitus' verses, but the influence of the model enhances the *tableaux* without affecting their structure. The influence of Ovid is limited to the aesthetic surface of the poetic *dictio* and the passages are selected for analogy of the context and liberally developed by Avitus using different hypotexts, including Marius Victor and Prudentius and, above all, Sidonius. The echoes of the *Metamorphoses* integrate the epic patterns taken from Virgil. Their consistent presence in the first book is due especially to the cosmogonic theme of *met.* I, used in the school and easy to apply to a Christian poetic reworking of *Genesis*.⁶⁶ Avitus' use of the *Metamorphoses* shows the more or less continual structural function of Ovidian patterns in the poetic fabric of his work and the more pronounced influence of the school on the handling of the model used in the plot. Like Sidonius, Avitus reworks Ovid's compact sequences with a continuous use of the same *loci* from the *Metamorphoses*, but, as in Rutilius' poem, this kind of intertextuality doesn't significantly influence the structure of the text, but merely affects cross-references and interacts with other hypotexts, thus enriching the surface of the text. Avitus' use of the *Metamorphoses* thus collects and amplifies all the features of Rutilius' and Sidonius' reading and inclusion of the Ovidian epic model.

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⁶⁶ The same is true of Lucretius' poem, well known by Christians, read and used through a scholastic selection intended to provide poetic matter dealing with cosmogonic themes; cf. Alfonsi 1978.

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Abstract

In this paper we will attempt to study the presence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in a broad sense including all forms of intertextuality, quotations, references or echoes. Our analysis will be restricted to certain verses by three of the most representative authors of Late Antique Gaul: Rutilius Namatianus, Sidonius Apollinaris and Alcimus Avitus of Vienne. The first part aims to point out Rutilius' poetic tendency to intermingle different echoes in a sort of puzzle where 'fragments' of the *Metamorphoses* are interlaced with other quotations and references to different poetical models. The second one, focused on the verses of Sidonius Apollinaris (especially on *carm.* 7) and Alcimus Avitus (mainly on the description of Paradise in *carm.* 1), tries to trace the presence of *Metamorphoses* in these works through the analysis of the echoes of the second book, its memory and the different modalities of its inclusion.

THE BARBARIAN KINGDOMS
(V-VI CENTURY)

THE *SATISFACTIO*:
STRATEGIES OF ARGUMENTATION
AND LITERARY MODELS.
THE ROLE OF OVID

In Vandal-occupied Africa, the poetic experience of Dracontius has a particular importance. The life of this poet, *vir clarissimus* and *togatus* from a senatorial family, was marked by a decisive event: his incarceration at the hands of the Vandal king Gunthamund (484-496).¹ The incident, which he also refers to in his epithalamia² and *Laudes Dei*,³ is the crux of his *Satisfactio*,

¹ On the life of Dracontius see PLRE II, *Dracontius* 2, pp. 379-380 and recently Wolff 2015; this scholar has proposed the hypothesis – unlikely in my opinion – of Dracontius' having been imprisoned twice, the first time for the poem celebrating an *ignotus dominus*, after which he was freed and went on to a brilliant judicial career, his prolonged corruption then leading to a second conviction (see Wolff 1998). The introduction of Moussy (in Camus – Moussy 1985) offers biographical information (pp. 7-31) alongside a useful overall picture of Dracontius' work (pp. 32-98), and discusses his reception by later authors (pp. 99-110).

² The *Romulea*, the ten poems of the codex *Neapolitanus Bibl. Nat. IV E 48* (N), from the fifteenth century, include the *epithalamium Ioannis et Vitulae* (*Romul.* 7) and the *epithalamium in fratribus dictum* (*Romul.* 6). The innovative feature of the two compositions (on which, see the comments of Luceri 2007 and Galli Milić 2008), with respect to the conventions of the genre, is that they make reference to the author's personal situation. The poem for Ioannis and Vitula, members of the *genus Fabianum*, was composed during his imprisonment, and in it he connects the suffering of his long period in prison (vv. 69-108) with his disappointment at having been abandoned by that group (vv. 118-124 and vv. 132-136), which in the past had saved him from a certain death sentence (vv. 125-126) to which Gunthamund had been persuaded partly through the efforts of an informer who had exaggerated Dracontius' errors (vv. 127-131). In *Romul.* 6, for the double wedding of the two sons of Victor, the poet recalls the aid he received from the young men's family, whose intercession earned him back his freedom and probably also his confiscated property (vv. 36-40).

³ The *Laudes Dei* contain autobiographical notes in the second part of the third book, in which Dracontius, in a *confessio animae peccatricis*, accepts the

a poem of 158 elegiac couplets. It was composed in prison and is addressed to the sovereign in an attempt to sway him to forgive and free the poet,⁴ who was guilty of having celebrated an *ignotus dominus*,⁵ but is now repentant and willing to offer reparation by paying homage to the reigning Hasdingi dynasty.

The meaning of the poem's title,⁶ its date of publication,⁷ the identity of the sovereign praised by Dracontius⁸ and the literary

blame for many grave sins (vv. 567-593), complains of his hard existence as a prisoner (vv. 597-607 and vv. 646-653) and, imploring divine mercy, asks God to allow him to regain his freedom and material prosperity (vv. 664-688 and 720-734).

⁴ The name of Gunthamund as the poem's addressee appears clearly both in the *explicit* of the codex V (*Vaticanus Regius Latinus* 1267), the only one that offers us the full text of the *Satisfactio* (*Explicit satisfactio Dracontii ad Gunthamundum regem Guandalorum dum esset in vinculis*), and in the *incipit* of the manuscript D (*Darmstadtensis* 3303), which gives us only verses 1-80 (*Incipit satisfactio Traconi ad Gunthamundum regem*). For more information on the manuscript tradition, see Moussy 1988, pp. 160-164.

⁵ On this issue, see below, n. 8.

⁶ Fontaine 1981, pp. 275 and, following in the same tracks, Moussy 1988, pp. 145-147, have pointed out that the noun *satisfactio* in the legal lexicon indicates reparation towards the injured party, but in Dracontius it also takes on the significance it has in Christian use, where it alludes to the re-establishment of the relationship between man and God, interrupted by sin. Therefore, on the political level the poem serves as reparation for Dracontius' offense to the sovereign, while on a religious level it is the instrument to obtain God's forgiveness and to sanction the return to God.

⁷ The *terminus post quem* is generally agreed as 491; the date can be deduced from the *Satisfactio* itself and in particular from the reference to Gunthamund's victory over Ansila (vv. 213-214) during the conflict between the Vandals and Goths of Theoderic for possession of Sicily, which began in 491. Kuijper 1958, pp. 18-19 and Moussy (in Camus – Moussy 1985, pp. 23 and 40) have gone further, hypothesizing 493 as the most likely year of composition, alleging that the *Satisfactio* was written after Odoacer's death at Theoderic's hands (March 493), this death being alluded to in their opinion in v. 131 (*nemo cadet sub iure tuo sub morte cruenta*), which they interpret to be a palinode. In fact, the two scholars believe the foreign sovereign Dracontius praised to be none other than Theoderic (cf. n. 8).

⁸ The *ignotus dominus* has been identified as Zeno, Theoderic or Odoacer. Papencordt 1837, p. 377 first proposed Zeno, Eastern Roman Emperor, who in 483-484, at the request of Pope Felix, intervened to aid African Catholics persecuted by the Vandal king Huneric. Kuijper 1958, p. 15 – repeated more recently by Moussy (see Camus – Moussy 1985, pp. 22-23) – on the basis of both religious and political considerations, argued that the unknown monarch is Theoderic, while Corsaro 1961, pp. 7-17, followed by Diaz de Bustamante 1978, pp. 65-86, identified the unknown addressee of the poem as Odoacer, at the time of his greatest glory, between 485 and 489. Over the years, scholars have embraced now one argument, now the other, although the theory that identi-

genre to which the *Satisfactio* belongs,⁹ as well as its poetic models and textual issues,¹⁰ have repeatedly attracted scholarly attention. However, it is my opinion that the *Satisfactio* still presents grounds for interest, especially for its relationship with the literary tradition and the ways in which that tradition is employed in the poet's strategy of argumentation. In my contribution I would like to attempt to reconsider this aspect, in particular by examining the space and the role that Dracontius accords

fies Zeno as the foreign sovereign seems to have enjoyed the largest following (in fact, it was endorsed by Romano 1959, pp. 18-23, Brožek 1980, Clover 1982 and Schetter 1990, pp. 91-94, while De Gaetano 2009, p. 319, also considers it the best substantiated). Finally, we should also mention the proposals of Wolff 1998, p. 383 and Merrills 2004, pp. 156-157, which shift the focus to the conflicts within the ruling dynasty. In Wolff's thinking – followed by Goldlust 2015, p. 244 – Dracontius addressed an occasional poem to Hilderic, Gunthamund's cousin and the son of his uncle and predecessor Huneric, which could suggest that he considered him his future sovereign. According to Merrills, the *dominus* praised by Dracontius was Huneric himself.

⁹ Some of the oldest editors have called the poem an elegy (Carpzov and Arevalo [= PL 60, col. 644]); even Gennaro, 1959, p. 10 defines the *Satisfactio* as 'un'elegia in cui si alternano elementi di accusa e di querimonie del poeta stesso e momenti di smarrimento', but he also claims that it 'appartiene al genere della *confessio*...' (p. 12). According to Fontaine 1981 it is an 'élégie de componction' (p. 274) and a '*psaume* romanisé et surtout actualisé' (p. 276), while other interpreters have emphasized the panegiristic tone (cf. Luiselli, 1992, p. 552; Schetter 1990, p. 105; De Gaetano 2009, pp. 320-321). Moussy 1988, p. 148, on the other hand, underlined the poem's composite nature ('le genre littéraire de la *Satisfactio* est donc composite: des passages en style hymnique y alternent avec les plaintes lyriques et les développements didactiques'), recently reiterated by Goldlust 2015, p. 255 ('Il faut pourtant noter que ce poème, à la fois et successivement plaidoyer, apologie, élégie, *deprecatio*, parénèse, diatribe, semble mettre en parallèle l'*ethos* mouvant du poète et le glissement des genres littéraires').

¹⁰ This is not the place for a critical review nor even just a complete list of the bibliography relating to the *Satisfactio*. Therefore, I will leave aside the contributions on specific textual issues as well as the references to this poem found in general studies on Dracontius' biography and work, and will merely mention that the critical edition usually referred to at the present moment is Moussy 1988, which I have followed here in quoting the text. It was preceded both by the Gennaro 1959 edition with Italian translation and commentary and Speranza 1978 which allows the reader to directly compare the text of the *Satisfactio* with the *recensio* written by Eugenius of Toledo for the Visigoth king Chindasuinth (641-652). In addition, Comparelli has authored a series of commentaries on the *Satisfactio* (Comparelli 2003 and 2003a, 2004, 2004a and 2004b; 2005) which, along with Comparelli 2006, are preparatory works for an as-yet-unrealized new edition. For a complete overview and interpretation of the poem, Schetter 1990, Galli Milić 2009 and Goldlust 2015 are also of the greatest importance.

Ovid in the broader political discourse he develops, driven by his need to recover his personal freedom.

Content and Structure of the Satisfactio

Three basic parts of the work can be recognized. The core of the argument is placed in the central part of the text (vv. 55-214), framed by an introductory section (vv. 1-54), which explains its reasons and purpose, and a concluding section (vv. 215-316) which, recapitulating the previous observations, addresses a final, heartfelt plea for forgiveness to the sovereign.¹¹

Introductory Section (vv. 1-54)

The poem begins with a passage in a hymn-like style that celebrates the eternity and immutability of God, creator and ruler of the universe, and ascribes control over human actions to his omnipotence:¹² *quidquid agunt homines, bona tristia prospera parva, / hoc fieri ammittunt ira favorque Dei* (vv. 15-16).¹³ This

¹¹ Lavina Galli Milić 2009, pp. 249 and 263 (annexe 2), has already moved in the same direction. However, she attributes a different length to the initial section, which she considers to include only vv. 1-18, ascribing vv. 19-54 to the central part of the composition. The division proposed here considers the poem as more balanced structurally by recognizing the introductory and final sections as similar in length and identifying the presence of the same elements (*confessio cul-pae* and request for forgiveness) in the three parts of the poem, where they occur in different forms and are developed in different ways. On this issue, especially on assimilation of the three sections of the poem to the parts of rhetorical discourse and on the evaluation of the *exordium*, see also below, pp. 338-340 and n. 55.

¹² Drac. *satisf.* 1-14: *Rex immense Deus, cunctorum conditor et spes, / quem tremunt omne solum, qui regis igne polum, / sidera flamma dies quem sol nox luna fatentur / auctorem, Dominum saecula cuncta probant: / principio seu fine carens et temporis expers / nescius alterni nec uice functus agis, / omnia permutans nullo mutabilis aevo / idem semper eris qui es modo uel fueras; / nil addit demittit tibi tam longa uetustas: / omnia tempus habent, nam tibi tempus abest; / qui mentes hominum qua uis per singula ducis / et quocumque iubes dirigis ingenia, / qui facis iratus homines contraria uelle / propitiusque iubes ut bona cuncta gerant.*

¹³ The two poetic precedents for *quidquid agunt homines* are: Iuv. 1. 85-86 (*Quidquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas, / gaudia, discursus, nostri farrago libelli est*) and Prud. *ham.* 763 (*Quidquid agunt homines Sodomorum incendia iustis / ignibus involvunt, et Christo iudice damnant*). The context of the passage from Prudentius deserves brief mention: he presents the story of Lot and his wife who was transformed into a pillar of salt for having violated the divine order not to look back at Sodom in flames. This episode is a *spectabile signum*

statement, which carries an echo of Augustinian thought,¹⁴ prepares to transition the argument from a universal dimension to the particular situation of the poet, who recognizes that his underestimation of the importance of celebrating the reigning dynasty is nothing but a consequence of divine wrath he provoked through his sins.¹⁵ The stories of Nebuchadnezzar and Zechariah not only reinforce the validity of Dracontius' argument by anchoring it to the truth of the sacred text, but, in testifying that God forgives and restores those who recognize their guilt, also legitimize his request for forgiveness: if it was because of sin that the Persian king was transformed into an ox and the old priest, the father of John the Baptist, was deprived of his voice, it was through repentance that divine mercy returned the former to his human condition and restored the latter's speech. No differently, God commands the king to pardon Dracontius, who has become *peior et deterior cane*¹⁶ because of his earlier poem, but is

(v. 724) of free will (cf. vv. 769-775: *En tibi signatum libertatis documentum / quo voluit nos scire Deus, quodcumque sequendum est, / sub nostra ditione situm [...]* *Duo cedere iussi / de Sodomis: alter se proripit, altera mussat, / ille gradum celerat fugiens, contra illa renutat; / liber utrique animus, sed dispar utrique voluntas*). The reuse of Prudentius' hemistich to recall the thought of St Augustine, who in opposing Pelagianism emphasized the importance of grace (cf. n. 14), could give rise to doubts about Dracontius' orthodox position on free will (as in Margaret 1936, p. 55). In fact, the reference to St Augustine – as suggested by Schetter 1990, pp. 97-99 – is almost certainly dictated by a precise strategy of argumentation: in fact, in ascribing the hardening of his heart to God, the poet is applying the process of *remotio criminis*, which the rhetorician Marius Victorinus summarized in the expression *feci, sed alter me impulit ut facerem*.

¹⁴ *Satisf.* 42; cf. *Aug. grat.* 21. 43 *...ita esse in Dei potestate, ut eas quo voluerit, quando voluerit, faciat inclinari vel ad beneficia quibusdam praestanda vel ad poenas quibusdam ingerendas, sicut ipse iudicat, occultissimo quidem iudicio, sed sine ulla dubitatione iustissimo*. The reference to St Augustine is confirmed by the fact that, like him, Dracontius also uses the message to Moses that God would harden Pharaoh's heart as an example to reinforce his argument: cf. *Aug. grat.* 23. 45 *Nam invenimus aliqua peccata etiam poenas esse aliorum peccatorum... sicut est induratio Pharaonis, cuius et causa dicitur, ad ostendendam in illo virtutem Dei* ~ *Drac. satisf.* 17-18 *Hoc tua verba probant Moseo dicta prophetae, / quod duraturus cor Pharaonis eras*.

¹⁵ *Drac. satisf.* 19-28: *Sic mea corda Deus, nostro peccante reatu / temporis immodici, pellit ad illicita, / ut qui facta ducum possem narrare meorum, / nominis Asdingui bella triumphigera, / unde mihi merces posset cum laude salutis / munere regnantis magna venire simul, / praemia despicerem tacitis tot regibus almis, / ut peterem subito certa pericla miser. / Quis nisi caelesti demens compulsus ab ira / aspera cuncta petat, prospera cuncta negat?*

¹⁶ The expression *peior cane*, here strengthened by the addition of the adject-

now repented of his guilt and ready to offer an act of reparation by praising the royal dynasty.¹⁷ In this way, the initial section clarifies the purpose of the writing and hints at issues that will be returned to and developed more fully later in the poem, from the nature of Dracontius' guilt to the sovereign's subordination to God, to the declaration of the public role of literature, which can be used as a tool for political propaganda.

Central Section (vv. 55-214)

The concept that *culpa quidem gravis est, venia sed digna reatus, / quod sine peccati crimine nemo fuit* (vv. 53-54) – both Christian and classical¹⁸ – seals the opening section and serves as a link with the central part of the composition (vv. 55-214). The idea that sin is not foreign to man gives rise to a broad digression on the *concordia discors* which governs creation and which results in the coexistence of good and evil (vv. 55-90): the same thing can harm or benefit and the series of examples begins, not coincidentally, with writing (*littera*).¹⁹

tive *deterior*, is proverbial and is repeated in Prud. *apoth.* 216 (*et Scottus sentit cane milite peior*), in a passage which shows contempt for the barbarians.

¹⁷ Drac. *satisf.* 29-52: *Irascente Deo mentes mutantur et artus, / vertuntur sensus, vertitur et species. / Persarum regem Babylonae regna tenentem / post decus imperii quis neget esse bovem? / Et diademalem turparunt cornua frontem / mugitus pecudis verba fuere duci. / Agricolam timuit post Parthica regna bubulcum / sum-misitque pavens regia colla iugo; / erravit per prata vagus mala gramina pastus / et qui homo bos fuerat de bove factus homo est. / Linquit et antistes serus pater ille Iohannis / elinguisque fuit voce tacente silens. / Ast ego peccando regi dominoque Deoque / peior sum factus deteriorque cane. / Vulnera vexati curat sua lingua molossi, / heu mea quippe mihi vulnera lingua dedit. / Sed qui restituit pecudis post membra tyrannum / ut fieret rediens ungula fissa manus, / quique reformavit tacitae modulamina linguae / ne mutilante sono verba ligata daret, / ipse meo domino Deus imperat atque iubebit / ut me restituat respiciatque pius, / servet, avi ut laudes dicam patriasque suasque / perque suas proles regia vota canam.*

¹⁸ The concept, already seen in the Bible, occurs frequently in Christian texts, but – as noted by Galli Milić 2009, p. 252 n. 31 – is not unknown in the pagan tradition; the scholar recalls Petron. 75. 1 (*'Nemo – inquit – nostrum non peccat. Homines sumus, non dei'*), to which we can add Sen. *ira* II. 28. 1 (*Si volumus aequi rerum omnium iudices esse, hoc primum nobis persuadeamus, neminem nostrum esse sine culpa*).

¹⁹ Drac. *satisf.* 61-64 *Littera doctiloquax apibus cognata refertur, / quis datur ut habeant vulnera castra favos. / Cera dat ingenium pueris, primordia sensus, / inde fit ut praestet littera vel noceat.*

Beyond the poet's implicit hope that the *Satisfactio* will benefit him as much as poetry previously harmed him, the *excursus*, like the opening hymn, develops general observations from which Dracontius then returns to his own case,²⁰ clarifying the nature of his guilt: *culpa mihi fuerat dominos reticere modestos / ignotumque mihi scribere vel dominum* (vv. 93-94).²¹ In short, the poet has behaved like the Jews who forgot God and worshiped the golden calf they had created.²² Nonetheless, confident that divine mercy grants forgiveness to repentant sinners,²³ he reaffirms before God his repentance for that poem to a foreign sovereign that he had so erred in composing (vv. 105-106 *carminis ... ausu / quod male disposui*), and once again invokes God's forgiveness with the prayer to inspire the king, too, to mercy towards him: *imperet armato pietas tua, prospera mandet / rex dominusque meus semper ubique pius; / nec mihi dissimilis quam quod solet esse catervis / sit pietate sua, sit bonus et placidus. / Nam tua sunt quaecumque gerit quaecumque iubebit, / iudiciumque Dei regia verba ferunt. / Exorent haec pauca Deum, qui mentis opertae / sensibus aetheriis condita vota videt* (vv. 109-116). From this passage, the overlap between political guilt and moral guilt is clear: in lacking respect toward his king, Dracontius was also guilty toward God,²⁴ and this is explained in view of the fact that the sovereign occupies a position between his subjects

²⁰ The transition is made by the rhetorical question *quod caelum, quod terra, fretum, quod purior aer / non meruere simul, hoc homo quando habeat?* (vv. 91-92).

²¹ On the meaning of the expression *dominos modestos* in reference to the Vandal kings, see Moussy (in Camus – Moussy 1985, p. 25 n. 2). The interpretation of v. 94 is problematic. Scholars agree in understanding *vel* as a synonym for *etiam*, but differ in their explanation of *ignotum scribere dominum* (celebrate a foreign sovereign or celebrate a foreigner as sovereign), which is closely connected with the identification of the (unknown to us) addressee of the panegyric (cf. above, n. 8). The first interpretation is adopted by those who consider Zeno to be the addressee, the second by those who prefer Theoderic or Odoacer.

²² Drac. *satisf.* 97-98 *Israhelitarum populum sic culpa tenebat, / quando Deum oblitus flans vitulum coluit.*

²³ Drac. *satisf.* 99-100 *Et tamen indulges veniam poscentibus, auctor, / si sceleris facti mens rea paeniteat.*

²⁴ Drac. *satisf.* 105-108 *Te coram primum me carminis ullius, ausu / quod male disposui, paenitet et fateor. / Post te, summe Deus, regi dominoque reus sum, / cuius ab imperio posco gemens veniam.*

and God, who directs his actions and makes His will known through the king's orders.²⁵ In fact, only after invoking God does Dracontius direct his plea directly to the Vandal king,²⁶ in the belief that lasting anger does not befit a benevolent man such as Gunthamund, who is capable of clemency towards his imprisoned enemies.²⁷ The poet also adds another corollary, which sounds almost like a warning: judgment and therefore potential punishment are God's right, and since the king is a man, and as such subject to the judgment of God, it is his duty to forgive if God wishes him to.²⁸ The celebration of the *pietas* of Gunthamund is therefore not only a *captatio benevolentiae*, but also the linchpin of a true strategy of argumentation, based on the *complexio*²⁹ and embellished through a comparison with the lion that spares those who lay down their arms and refuses prey that has not killed.³⁰

In addition to offering an act of contrition, Dracontius endeavours to demonstrate that forgiveness befits a Christian king: if – as attested by the Scriptures – the kingdom of a venerable sovereign is a reflection of God's kingdom, the sovereign himself, in order to imitate the king of heaven, cannot refuse to grant

²⁵ Drac. *satisf.* 103-104 *cuius (scil. Dei) sancta manus sustentat corda regentum / et pius inclinas mox ubicumque iubet* and 113-114 *Nam tua sunt quaecumque gerit quaecumque iubebit, / iudiciumque Dei regia verba ferunt*.

²⁶ Drac. *satisf.* 117-118 *Ad te nunc, princeps, mea vela retorqueo supplex, pectore mente rogans, voce manuque petens*.

²⁷ Drac. *satisf.* 119-120 *Da dextram misero, veniam concede precanti, / tempore tam longo non decet ira pium*; this motif is also repeated and developed in *satisf.* 125-136 *Qui pereunt bello soli moriuntur in hostes, qui superest pugnae, vivat ut ipse, iubet. / Captivus securus agit solusque rebellis / formidat mortem, praeda quieta sedet. / Conservas animas, victum super ipse ministras, / ne sit vita gravis subripiente fame. / Nemo cadet sub iure tuo sub morte cruenta, / scit se victurum qui volet esse tuus. / Turba rebellantum quotiens oravit in armis / vinceret aut certe praeda fuisset iners. / Securus sine morte manus dat hostibus hostis, / nam bene conservas colla subacta iugo*.

²⁸ Drac. *satisf.* 121-124 *Nam qui inimicorum culpis veniale minaris, / captivosque tuos deliciis epulas, / puniat ut sit quod Christus, tu parcis iniquis; / vindice quo regnas, quo vigilante viges*.

²⁹ As Galli Milić 2009, p. 254 and n. 45 observes, it is as if Dracontius said: *Si pius, cur non in omnes?*

³⁰ Drac. *satisf.* 137-148. The comparison of the king's wrath to the lion's roar is a biblical motif (e.g. Prov. 19, 12), but the image – which the poet also employs in *Romul.* 8, 350-362 – is not extrinsic to the poetic tradition, in particular cf. Verg. *Aen.* I. 294-296 and IX. 339-341.

forgiveness.³¹ The call to practice forgiveness is supported by various *exempla*, both biblical and historical. David and Solomon, elected and confirmed in their role by the will of God, exercised clemency in the art of governing, one in war and the other in peace,³² and St Stephen, the first martyr, begged forgiveness for his killers.³³ But the virtue of *clementia* is certainly not foreign to the Roman imperial tradition: Caesar, disdaining vengeance, spared enemies and reinstated the fortunes of citizens;³⁴ Augustus ushered in an era of peace, during which Christ was born;³⁵ Titus used to say that he had wasted a day if, when the sun set, he had not been able to grant anyone a favour;³⁶ Commodus' advice³⁷ to rulers is summarized in the warning: '*Sit bonus in vita qui volet esse deus*'.³⁸ This long series of examples is certainly interesting, for it shows Dracontius aligning himself with the basic principles of the propaganda of the Vandal kings, who not only intended to equate their kingdom to the Roman imperial model, but also conceived of their power as directly granted by God. In this way the African poet gives strength to his request, but also implicitly presents Gunthamund with a model

³¹ Drac. *satisf.* 149-154 *Ignoscendo pius nobis imitare Tonantem, / qui indulget culpas et veniam tribuit. / Principis augusti simile est ad regna polorum, / ut canit ad populos pagina sancta Dei, / sacrilegis referens caelestia iura catervis / cinctus apostolica discipulante manu.*

³² Drac. *satisf.* 157-170.

³³ Drac. *satisf.* 171-172.

³⁴ Drac. *satisf.* 175-178.

³⁵ Drac. *satisf.* 179-182.

³⁶ Drac. *satisf.* 183-186.

³⁷ The mention of Commodus, remembered by pagan history as an execrable emperor (*Hist. Aug. Aur.* 16. 1 and 27. 12; *Comm.* 1-3), has aroused some concern, to the point that some have argued that Dracontius confused him with his father Marcus Aurelius (Vollmer 1905, p. 124 and recently De Gaetano 2009, pp. 331-335), or with the poet Commodianus (Kuijper 1958, pp. 52-56). Others have justified his presence here thinking that the poet was drawing on the Christian tradition, which made a positive example of him for his having ended the persecution of Christians (see Alfonsi 1961), while Mazzarino 1963, p. 36, has speculated it is Lucius Verus. What is more likely is the explanation that has emerged with Clover, according to which there was a historiographical tradition in Africa in favour of Commodus (Clover 1988, pp. 29-30) and that what links the four emperors mentioned by Dracontius, more than their clemency, is the fact that they received divine honours (Clover 1989, pp. 64-65). On this issue see also below, p. 344.

³⁸ Drac. *satisf.* 187-190.

for behaviour and suggests that the exercise of clemency would give veracity to Vandal propaganda, confirming both the divine origin of the royal power and its continuity with the Roman tradition.

This section on the nature of power and the method of exercising it closes with an interesting addendum (vv. 191-214). Dracontius – beginning with the observation that clemency is good for the soul³⁹ – reminds the king first that he is responsible for his public image and as such he must ensure the truth of the title *pius* with which his subjects hail him,⁴⁰ and then that forgiveness would be an opportunity for exclusive glory. In fact, while military glory must be shared with soldiers, the glory that comes from *clementia*, the fruit of a more difficult battle with one's own heart, belongs only to the king.⁴¹

Final Section (vv. 215-316)

The final section takes an approach similar to that of the previous two and opens with a broad digression on the subject of time. Each thing (from the ages of human life to natural elements) has its own time; yet nature is renewed cyclically, while *homini sua non redit aetas*, / *sed velut acris avis sic fugitiva volat* (vv. 255-256). At the end of this *excursus* Dracontius once again addresses the Vandal king in a last-ditch attempt to mitigate his wrath.⁴² Recognizing once again the error he committed and borrowing David's words of contrition to God,⁴³ he insists on the divine precept of forgiveness,⁴⁴ advises the king again on the duty of

³⁹ Drac. *satisf.* 191-192 *Ecce quid impendit homini clementia simplex, / ut praestet bona dans conferet atque animae.*

⁴⁰ Drac. *satisf.* 193-195 *Ne facias populum mendacem, qui tibi clamat / vocibus innumeris 'rex dominusque pius'; / ut vox vera sonet 'dominus', sic vera 'pius' sit.*

⁴¹ Drac. *satisf.* 196-214.

⁴² *Ut mi irascaris, quis sim qui dignior ira / tam magni regis iudicer esse tua?* (*satisf.* 265-266) is the rhetorical question which, through the topos of the *demi-nutio sui*, marks the transition to the poet's personal story.

⁴³ Drac. *satisf.* 309-310 *Dicam regnanti domino pia verba prophetae: / 'Etsi peccavi, sum tamen ipse tuus'.*

⁴⁴ Drac. *satisf.* 287-290 *Si non humani generis peccata fuissent, / unde pium nomen posset habere Deus? / Sed quia dat veniam populis peccata relaxans, per pietatis opus nomen habet placidum.*

forgiving if one wishes, in turn, to receive God's mercy⁴⁵ and reminds him that by showing him indulgence he would earn certain glory.⁴⁶ The poem closes with an image that visually condenses the meaning of the plea and helps to clarify the purpose of the digression on time that introduces the last part of the poem: *sessorem, dum carpit iter, si cornea palps / ungula concutiat quadrupedantis equi, / verberare corrigitur culpa plectente flagello, / non simul abscisi crura pedesque iacent* (vv. 313-316).

In the final section, the poet makes two new observations: the injustice of his punishment and the recognition of culture as source of *pietas*. The fact that the punishment of Dracontius was a *noxia poena*, contrary to God's teaching, is demonstrated by the fact that it also affects his innocent family.⁴⁷ That *παιδεία* is both the root and the guarantee of clemency, meanwhile, is confirmed by the *exemplum* of Genseric, one of Gunthamund's forbears. Genseric was induced by culture to forgive, sparing the life of the guilty rhetorician Vincomalus, because he admired his eloquence.⁴⁸ In short, 'Dracontius would appeal to Gunthamund's culture to obtain forgiveness for himself: by saving the life of a poet, he would prove himself to be the worthy heir of the *pietas* and the *doctrina* of his progenitor'.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Drac. *satisf.* 305-308 *Qui poscit hac lege Deum ut peccata relaxet, / debet et ipse suo parcere ubique reo. / Non semel ignosci dixit lex sancta reatum, / sed quotiens culpa est, sit totiens venia.*

⁴⁶ Drac. *satisf.* 297-298 *Materiem laudis praebet tibi culpa reorum / et titulos famae dat pietatis opus.*

⁴⁷ Drac. *satisf.* 281-286 *Sontes peccantes tantum sua culpa fatigat; / ecce etiam insontes noxia poena petit. / Si ipse ego peccavi, quatenam est, rogo, culpa meorum, / quos simul exagitat frigus inopsque fames? / Diluvio periere rei sine clade piorum; / Loth bonus et iustus tollitur ex Sodomis.*

⁴⁸ Drac. *satisf.* 299-302 *Inclitus armipotens, vestrae pietatis origo, / et docto genio pronior ad veniam, / 'Non homini ignosco', dixit, 'sed lingua meretur'; hic reus et doctus Vincomalos fuerat.* In v. 300, I have accepted the amendment *docto*, which agrees with *genio*, proposed by Schetter 1990, p. 112, n. 59, which corrects the received *doctus*. The claim that Genseric was moved to forgiveness not by his nature but by culture gives the passage a decisive role in the development of the argument, for the purpose of claiming – among other things – the importance of culture in the exercise of *clementia* (see below, pp. 345-346).

⁴⁹ De Gaetano 2009, p. 337: 'Draconzio farebbe appello alla cultura di Gontamondo per ottenere a sua volta il perdono: risparmiando la vita di un poeta, egli si sarebbe dimostrato degno erede della *pietas* e della *doctrina* del progenitore'.

Strategies of Argumentation and Literary Models

If we merely examine the surface of the *Satisfactio*, we risk offering a simplistic interpretation unable to grasp the implications and resonances conveyed by the skilful fusion of rhetorical strategies and reuse of literary models. The poem shows – more than might appear at first – the author's attendance of schools of rhetoric⁵⁰ and his profession of *togatus*.⁵¹ In fact, Dracontius admits his guilt and, advancing his own (future) merits and value to the sovereign, to beg a lenient judgment, from which Gunthamund himself could benefit. Therefore we can consider the poem as akin to a *deprecatio*⁵² and can identify a certain consonance between its three sections and the traditional parts of classical argument.⁵³ The initial section, where Dracontius confesses his sins and hopes for divine forgiveness, pledging to celebrate the ruling dynasty, is not unlike the *exordium*,⁵⁴ its purpose is to get his addressee's attention and prepare him to listen.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ *Romul.* 3. 14-20 confirms that Dracontius attended the school of the rhetorician Felicianus, who is credited with having returned to Carthage the *litterae fugatae* by the Vandal invaders (*Romul.* 1. 12-13). In fact the *Romulea* themselves – whether or not they were rhetorical exercises composed in honour of the master (cf. Bureau 2006) – bear the marks of Dracontius' rhetorical education. Not only can we recognize their inclusion of an *ethopoeia* (*Romul.* 4), a *controversia* (*Romul.* 5) and a *suasoria* (*Romul.* 9), but the influence of the school of rhetoric can be seen in the formulation and in the plot of all the poems.

⁵¹ Dracontius himself, in *Romul.* 7. 123 defines himself as *inter iura poeta*. Gualandri 1974 must be credited with having observed and analysed the influence of legal language on Dracontius' poetic vocabulary; on this, see also the more recent Santini 2006.

⁵² *Cic. inv.* I. 11. 15 *Deprecatio est, cum et peccasse et consulto peccasse reus se confitetur et tamen, ut ignoscatur, postulat; quod genus perraro potest accidere.* *Quint. inst.* v. 13. 5 notes that *deprecatio quidem, quae est sine ulla specie defensionis, rara admodum et apud eos solos iudices, qui nulla certa pronuntiandi forma tenentur, et addis: in senatu vero et apud populum et apud principem et ubicumque sui iuris clementia est, habet locum deprecatio (inst. VII. 4. 18).*

⁵³ Cf. Lausberg 1973², p. 120.

⁵⁴ *Cic. inv.* I. 15. 20 *Exordium est oratio animum auditoris idonee comparans ad reliquam dictionem: quod eveniet, si eum benivolum, attentum, docilem confererit.*

⁵⁵ Lavinia Galli Milić 2009 has proposed a similar reading (see above, n. 11), but considers the *exordium* to be the initial passage in the style of a hymn (vv. 1-18); in fact, she sees vv. 19-54 as part of the central section of the poem, that of the *argumentatio*. However, even admitting that vv. 19-28 (Dracontius' wrongful act is the result of God's wrath) have argumentational force comparable

The middle section, while also making reference to the event (*narratio*),⁵⁶ develops a series of arguments to persuade Gunthamund to forgive, and is therefore comparable to the *confirmatio* or *probatio*.⁵⁷ The final section, in which the poet summarizes and partly expands his argument and also appeals to the king's *animus* to obtain his freedom, is the equivalent of the *conclusio* or *peroratio*.⁵⁸

Yet there's more. In the poem's compositional structure, certain constants are repeated: each of the three sections is open to general digression (respectively, vv. 1-18, 55-90 and 215-264), which expresses a universal truth, in light of which the poet's particular situation is presented. On the one hand, such *excursus* are treatises *extra ordinem* to benefit Dracontius' case,⁵⁹ serving to develop and strengthen the argument; on the other hand they allow him to offer a demonstration of his skill as a poet and they thus serve to *delectare*. The common thread that joins the three sections is the *confessio culpae* with the resulting request for

to the *remotio criminis* (see above, n. 13), one cannot not consider that the hymn-like *incipit* is the necessary prerequisite for the development of this argument, and is in turn closely linked to the request for forgiveness which occupies vv. 49-54. The fact that vv. 1-54 are introductory is, in my opinion, also confirmed by the absence of specific references to the crime and by the attempt to bring the king to be favourably disposed to listen, both by praising his race (vv. 21-25) and by the admission of guilt (vv. 19-20; 27-28; 41-42 and 53).

⁵⁶ Cic. *inv.* I. 19. 27 *Narratio est rerum gestarum aut ut gestarum expositio*; also, with regard to the *narratio* that contains the exposition of the suit, *oportet eam tres habere res: ut brevis, ut aperta, ut probabilis sit* (*inv.* I. 20. 28). Quint. IV. 2. 21 specifies – and this applies here – that *neque narratio in hoc reperta est, ut tantum cognoscat iudex, sed aliquanto magis, ut consentiat*.

⁵⁷ *Probatio* is Quintilian's term and is the equivalent of Cicero's *confirmatio* (Cic. *inv.* I. 24. 34 *confirmatio est, per quam argumentando nostrae causae fidem et auctoritatem et firmamentum adiungit oratio*).

⁵⁸ Cic. *inv.* I. 52. 98 *conclusio est exitus et determinatio totius orationis*; the definition of *top.* 98 is more precise: *peroratio autem et alia quaedam habet et maxime amplificationem, cuius effectus hic debet esse, ut aut perturbentur animi aut tranquillentur, et si ita iam adfecti ante sint, ut aut augeat eorum motus aut sedet oratio*.

⁵⁹ Thus they are indeed comparable – as previously noted by Schetter 1990, p. 102 – to the *egressio* or *parekbasis*, which Quintilian defines as *alicuius rei, sed ad utilitatem causae pertinentis, extra ordinem excurrens tractatio* (IV. 3. 14). See also Cic. *inv.* I. 51. 97: *in hac autem digressionem ille (sc. Hermagoras) putat oportere quandam inferre orationem a causa atque a iudicatione ipsa remotam, quae [...] in aliam causam deducat, ex qua conficiat aliquid confirmationis aut reprehensionis, non argumentando, sed augendo per quandam amplificationem*.

forgiveness;⁶⁰ nonetheless this last takes the form of an increasing *gradatio*. From the initial request, almost obscured by the biblical examples of Nebuchadnezzar and Zechariah, the poem moves on to the explicit and argument-filled central section, and finally to the more heartfelt, emotional plea of the conclusion, which translates the meaning of the request into an image of unquestionable visual effectiveness: the horse, guilty of having thrown down his rider, is corrected by a lash of the whip, but without cutting its legs and feet (vv. 313-316).

Dracontius' arguments are twofold. On the one hand, he presents justification for his guilt (God guides human actions; some sins are the result of divine wrath in punishment for previous sins where there has been no repentance; no one is without sin; good and evil coexist in the order of creation and therefore also in man). On the other hand, he indicates the reasons why the king should forgive (the ruler's benevolence is measured according to its imitation of the *pietas* of God; clemency is evidence of continuity with the Roman imperial tradition, and not only ensures Gunthamund earthly glory greater than his military glory, but also ensures rewards for his soul in the afterlife; forgiveness would confirm the truth of the title *pius* with which the king is acclaimed by the people; everything – even punishment – has its time; the king's anger toward the poet is contrary to nature, as the swallow is not the quarry of an eagle, nor the hare the prey of a lion). These arguments are essentially Christian, as confirmed by the

⁶⁰ In the introductory section, the *ethos* of Dracontius is that of the repentant sinner, who first admits to having been the object of divine wrath (vv. 27-28), then, recognizing his guilt, stoops to comparing himself to a dog and becomes the object of his own irony (vv. 41-44), concluding that *culpa quidem gravis est* (v. 53). This admission of guilt is paired with the request for forgiveness by virtue of divine mercy (vv. 49-54). In the central part the poet goes so far as to accuse himself of idolatry (95-98) and only later, and through the mediation of God, does he make explicit reference to his crime toward Gunthamund (vv. 107-108), trusting in his forgiveness (vv. 109-120), which should imitate divine mercy (vv. 109-114). Finally, in the concluding section, the repeatedly reiterated guilt (vv. 283; 295; 310), together with the *ethos* of the moralizer, appealing to the *tempora certa* of nature and rising to the role of interpreter of divine teaching (see Goldlust 2015, pp. 252-254), is the premise for a new heartfelt plea for forgiveness (vv. 311-316), concealing behind it the attempt to present Gunthamund with his duties, showing his unworthiness should he not accommodate a request that has its foundation in the divine precepts and in the laws of nature.

initial reference to Augustinian thought (see above, n. 14), the systematic use of Biblical *exempla* and the constant references to scripture.⁶¹

It is not of secondary importance to look into the reasons for such a choice in a poem addressed to an Arian king. According to Moussy the reference to the Holy Writ does not pose a problem, since the *Satisfactio* does not address any theological issue and the poet simply suggests the mercy of God for the king to imitate.⁶² Schetter has observed that the Bible is the *Grundlage* of the two confessions and allows the writer to draw from the same images and the same language.⁶³ De Gaetano correlates Dracontius' choice with his desire to conform (at least in appearance) to the logic of the *imitatio imperii* that Gunthamund pursues.⁶⁴ Schetter's and De Gaetano's observations are both

⁶¹ By way of exemplification, some of the passages in which the reference to the Bible is immediately clear include: the image of the king's heart in the hand of God (v. 103: *cuius sancta manus sustentat corda regentum*), repeated in Prov. 21. 1 (*ita cor regis in manu Domini, quocumque voluerit inclinabit illud*); the claim that God knows the depths of the human soul (vv. 115-116: *qui mentis opertae / sensibus aetheriis condita vota videt*), which derives from 1 Reg. 8. 39 (*tu [scil. Deus] facies ut des unicuique secundum omnes vias suas sicut videris cor eius quia tu nosti solus cor omnium filiorum hominum*); the comparison of the king to the kingdom of the heavens, which is evangelical (cf. Matth. 18. 23 *ideo adsimilatum est regnum caelorum homini regi* and *satisf. 151 Principis augusti simile est ad regna polorum*); the warning not to let the sun set on one's anger (vv. 155-156 *Nonne Dei praecepta iubent ne sol cadat intrans / irascente animo, sed pius extet homo?*), seen in Eph. 4. 26 (*sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram*); the idea that a sovereign capable of forgiveness is deserving of merit more important than military victory (vv. 207-210 *Qui fodit adversos hostes certamina Martis / horrida concurrens, vincit in arma fremens; / rex, qui dat veniam subiecto et temperat iras, / plus quam turba facit, qui sua corda domat*), from Prov. 16. 32 (*melior est patiens viro forte e qui dominatur animo suo expugnatore urbium*); the image of God making the sun rise and sending rain on both the just and the unjust (vv. 293-294 *Si iustis solem Dominus pluviasque dedisset / nec daret iniustis, quae fuerat pietas?*); the motif of the sick seeking a doctor (v. 296 *nonne manus medici languida membra petunt?*), found respectively in Matth. 5. 45 (*ut sitis filii Patris vestri qui in caelis est qui solem suum oriri facit super bonos et malos et pluit super iustos et iniustos*) and Matth. 9. 12 (*at Iesus audiens ait: 'Non est opus valentibus medico, sed male habentibus'*). At v. 310 (*Etsi peccavi, sum tamen ipse tuus*) Dracontius adopts the words of Ps. 118. 94 (*Tuus ego sum, salva me*) and Sap 15. 2 (*etenim si peccaverimus, tui sumus*). There are also biblical roots to the concept of a proper time for all things (cf. Eccl. 3. 1-8) and the idea of royal power deriving from God (cf. Rom. 13. 1-8).

⁶² Moussy in Camus – Moussy 1985, p. 18 n. 6.

⁶³ Schetter 1990, p. 95.

⁶⁴ De Gaetano 2009, pp. 323-325.

convincing and they allow us to point out that both the identification of an element in common and the conformity with the Vandal conception of power line up with a carefully thought-out rhetorical strategy: the attempt to appear as credible as possible in the eyes of the intended audience, which Dracontius ensures by creating congruity between his positions and the opinion of the king.⁶⁵ What Schetter observes is evident in the sections where the author endeavours to justify his undenied guilt. Indeed, Christian references, based on the authority of the Bible, are the most effective way to lend credibility to his statements. Where his argumentation shows the king the necessity of forgiveness, Dracontius adapts to the position of Gunthamund and the Vandals in general, who conceived of their power in Africa as being directly granted by God, the very emanation of divine power.⁶⁶ The result – as in a syllogism – is such as to leave the king no alternative: if God is mercy (and the indisputable authority of the scriptures attests to this) and the king is God's representative on earth (and the Vandals publicized this claim), then the king cannot refuse to show mercy toward Dracontius. The respect for this ideal would, at the same time, also ensure respect for the idea that the power of the Vandal kings can be equated with the Roman imperial model, another cornerstone of their propaganda.⁶⁷ In other words, the Christian references render the arguments irrefutable. They are the poet's most effective tool to *movere* the addressee to forgiveness, but at the same time he also uses them to *docere*. In fact, Dracontius, in leveraging the principles dear to the Vandals and the image of their power

⁶⁵ Cf. Lausberg 1973², p. 35; he notes that a high degree of credibility is created by representing, from the start, an opinion that agrees with that of the judge.

⁶⁶ The idea of power granted by God, an emanation of divine power, was affirmed in the Christian world with Constantine, although it is not without precedent in the Roman tradition, where the Augustan ideology calls on the emperor to reproduce on earth the government of Jupiter in the heavens (see Fears 1977). With the Vandals, the same conception is already found with Genseric, who presents his kingship as *a divinitate accepta* (Iord. *Get.* 169).

⁶⁷ Following the conquest of Africa, Genseric calls himself *dominus* (Vict. Vit. 1. 20) and it is with Gunthamund that the imperial title *rex dominusque* becomes official, remaining in force even with his successors (see Wroth 1911, pp. 8-9); on Gunthamund's role in the adoption of imperial titles and emblems, see Moderan 2002, p. 96.

that they desired to offer the Roman population of Africa, appears to be performing an act of reparation, but in substance he is pointing out a pattern of behaviour for Gunthamund, showing what he should be (and is not) if he wants to follow the path of the Roman tradition and validate the Vandals' very conception of power.

Moreover, the political colouring of the speech⁶⁸ is confirmed by the *Satisfactio*'s development of certain themes drawn straight from panegyric literature, from the celebration of military glory balanced by a forgiving disposition toward defeated enemies, to the praise of the *clementia principis*, not forgetting the exaltation of the *παιδεία* of the sovereign as the source of his virtue and magnanimity.⁶⁹ However, it must not be ignored that, in comparison with the *Panegyrici Latini*, these themes are developed with a Christian approach, as Eusebius did in his eulogy for Constantine,⁷⁰ as Ambrose does in his two funeral orations for Theodosius and Valentinian, and as would be done some time later – once again for an Arian king – in Cassiodorus'/Amalasunta's praise for Theodahad⁷¹ and then in praise of Amalasunta herself.⁷² However, Dracontius, in his Christianized treatment of certain *topoi* of the encomiastic tradition, in one way aligns

⁶⁸ The poem has traditionally been grouped along with the *Laudes Dei* among Dracontius' Christian writings. However, recent criticism has gone beyond this strict division between secular and Christian production, not only because it is difficult to distinguish between a pagan period and a Christian period in Dracontius' literary production on the basis of chronological considerations (Moussy in Camus – Moussy 1985, p. 76), but also because of 'l'esistenza di una fittissima rete di richiami [...] fra l'opera profana e quella cristiana, che testimoniano l'afferenza di diversi tipi di produzione poetica a un unico mondo intellettuale e spirituale' (De Gaetano 2009, p. 117).

⁶⁹ The most comprehensive theory on βασιλικὸς λόγος is offered by the treaty attributed to the rhetorician Menander (late third-early fourth century), whose most recent edition (with English translation) is the one by Russell – Wilson, 1981. For an overview of the laudatory literature of antiquity and late antiquity, see also Pernot 1993.

⁷⁰ The intersections between the *Satisfactio* and the Eastern panegyric tradition are carefully analysed by De Gaetano 2009, pp. 326-330 and 333-334, referred to here. It should, however, be pointed out that the possibility of Dracontius having directly read those texts depends on his knowledge of Greek, which has not been proved.

⁷¹ *Var.* x. 3.

⁷² *Var.* xi. 1.

himself with the propaganda of the Vandals, but in another attempts to direct it, and traces a sort of *speculum principis*,⁷³ as demonstrated by the passage where he admonishes and presses the dedicatee, assuming a moralizing *ethos*.⁷⁴

The operation performed by the poet, however, is even more subtle: the contrast between the sovereign's propaganda and his real exercise of power – suggested more than declared by the verses of the *Satisfactio* – casts the shadow of tyranny over Gunthamund. Of particular interest in this regard are the *exempla clementiae* drawn from the Roman imperial tradition: if it is true that the examples are primarily topical, one cannot but consider that Caesar is cited in *Romul.* 5 as an example of brutal tyranny,⁷⁵ that Commodus, whose identity is debated, could indeed be the execrable emperor mentioned in the historiographical tradition, even though there was propaganda favorable to him in Africa,⁷⁶ and that Augustus himself, in light of the reference to *Tristia* II (see below), was lacking in clemency. In short, if the verses are read in this light, we can glean a reference to the tyrannical implications of political power, and of Gunthamund's power in particular. Additional evidence to this effect comes from the comparison made in the central section of Dracontius' poem, in vv. 137-146:

Sic leo terribile fremit horridus ore cruento
 unguibus excussis dente minante neces;
 acrius iratus crispato lumine ferri
 et mora si fuerit, acrius inde furit;
 at si venator trepidans venabula ponat
 territus et iaceat, mox perit ira cadens.
 Temnit praedo cibos, quos non facit ipse cadaver,
 ac ferus ignoscit, ceu satis accipiat,
 et dat prostrato veniam sine vulnere victo.

⁷³ Consolino 2000, p. 205.

⁷⁴ Goldlust 2015, pp. 249-254 conducts a detailed analysis of the passages and the devices through which Dracontius assumes the role of interpreter of divine teachings in the second part of the poem, pressuring and admonishing his own sovereign.

⁷⁵ Drac. *Romul.* 5. 205-207 *Divitiae fortes semper fecere tyrannos: / hinc Marius, hinc Sylla ferus, hinc Cinna cruentus, / inde fuit Caesar, dominatio prima senatus.*

⁷⁶ See above, n. 37.

These verses recall *trist.* III. 5. 31-34:

Quo quisque est maior, magis est placabilis irae
et faciles motus mens generosa capit.
Corpora magnanimo satis est prostrasse leoni,
pugna suum finem, cum iacet hostis, habet.

The echo of the Ovidian hypotext, which, in the following verses, explains: *at lupus et turpes instant morientibus ursi, / et quaecumque minor nobilitate fera est* (vv. 35-36), might suggest, indirectly, that the sovereign is behaving like a tyrant.

The key element that would make the transformation of tyranny possible is culture, the source of *pietas* for the sovereign and of civilization for barbarians; it is certainly not an accident that the example that Dracontius offers Gunthamund to imitate is that of his predecessor Genseric who, in the name of culture, was able to forgive the rhetorician Vincomalus. Thus the poet claims for the Roman cultural tradition the role of an instrument of integration between the Romans and the Vandals, and for himself, as a man of letters, the role of cultural mediator. Cassiodorus would carry out a similar operation some years later. In his epistle of 533, with which he assumes the position of Praetorian prefect and asks the Roman Senate for support in fulfilling his new duties, in order to build consensus around the regent Amalasunta and prove that she is *capax imperii* and has a pro-Roman and pro-senatorial attitude, he testifies to her mastery of Greek and Latin and to her invaluable possession of literary culture, which confirms her grasp of the Greek-Latin cultural tradition.⁷⁷ These aspects of the 'panegyric' to the Ostrogoth prince reappear one year later in *var.* x. 3, where the praise of culture

⁷⁷ *Var.* xi. 1. 6-7 *Hanc enim dignissime omnia regna venerantur quam videre reverentia est, loquentem audire miraculum. Qua enim lingua non probatur esse doctissima? Atticae facundiae claritate diserta est; Romani eloquii pompa resplendet; nativi sermonis ubertate gloriatur: excellit cunctos in propriis cum sit aequaliter ubique mirabilis. Nam si vernaculam linguam bene nosse prudentis est, quid de tali sapientia poterit aestimari quae tot genera eloquii inoffensa exercitatione custodit? Hinc venit diversis nationibus necessarium magnumque presidium, quod apud aures prudentissimae dominae nullus eget interprete. Non enim aut legatus moram aut interpellans aliquam sustinet de mediatoris tarditate iacturam quando uterque et genuinis verbis auditur et patriotica responsione componitur. Lungitur his rebus quasi diadema eximium inpretiabilis notitia litterarum, per quam, dum veterum prudentia discitur, regalis dignitas semper augetur.*

returns in the compliments that Amalasunta pays Theodahad, stressing that his possession of literary culture and knowledge of ecclesiastical letters will ensure good governance.⁷⁸

The Role of Ovid

In the construction of the *Satisfactio*, the use of the classics conveys the central role of tradition; its immediate forerunners, unanimously cited by critics, are Claudian's *deprecatio ad Hadrianum* (*carm. min.* 22) and Ovid's exile elegies.⁷⁹ Both Dracontius and Claudian share such elements as the admission of guilt and request for forgiveness; both evoke the unjust fate of family members and use comparisons, especially between the addressee and animals that disdain the prey they have won.⁸⁰ Yet the two poems were born out of different contexts and, more importantly, there are no textual indicators of references to Claudian by Dracontius, who instead seems to rely directly on Ovid's exile work, from which Claudian himself had taken various themes, which he reworked with irony.⁸¹ Moreover, Dracontius' choice of metre also confirms that the elegies Ovid composed in exile were his primary reference, a choice all the more significant considering that, apart from the short poem (14 verses) *de origine*

⁷⁸ Var. x. 3. 4-5 *Accessit his bonis desiderabilis eruditio litterarum, quae naturam laudabilem eximie reddit ornatam. Ibi prudens invenit unde sapientior fiat, ibi bellator reperit unde animi virtute roboretur; inde princeps accipit quemadmodum populos sub aequalitate componat, nec aliqua in mundo potest esse fortuna quam litterarum non augeat gloriosa notitia. [...] Princeps vester etiam ecclesiasticis est litteris eruditus, a quibus semper quicquid est pro homine commonemur: iudicare recte, bonum sapere, divina venerari, futura cogitare iudicia.*

⁷⁹ Noteworthy studies on the presence of Ovid in Dracontius and in the *Satisfactio* in particular include – in addition to Galli Milić 2009 – Clerici 1973 and Bouquet 1982.

⁸⁰ In his brief *deprecatio*, Claudian, judging the recipient's wrath to be excessive (vv. 1-5 and 11) asks for forgiveness, confessing his guilt (vv. 11-12) and laments the unjust fate of his *domus* (vv. 23-26). The request for forgiveness is reinforced by the use of various mythical or historical *exempla* (vv. 13-21 and 46-49) and, as in Dracontius, the *topos* of the *deminutio sui* is developed through a comparison of the addressee with animals and natural forces that do not attack inferior prey (vv. 27-40).

⁸¹ For the interpretation of Claudian's poem as ironic, see Cameron 1970 and Consolino 2004. In any case, whatever the interpretation of *carm. min.* 22, as Claudian employs the topical patterns of a *deprecatio*, Dracontius' congruity of themes with his predecessor is inevitable.

rosarum, the *Satisfactio* is Dracontius' only poem in elegiac couplets.

However, the presence of Ovid in the *Satisfactio* goes beyond the elegies from exile, as demonstrated both by the description of the double metamorphosis of Nebuchadnezzar and by the passage on the *concordia discors*. Nebuchadnezzar's story is narrated in vv. 31-38:

Persarum regem Babylonae *regna tenentem*
 post *decus imperii quis neget esse bovem?*
 Et diademalem turparunt cornua frontem,
 mugitus pecudis verba fuere duci.
 Agricolam timuit post Parthica regna bubulcum
 summisitque pavens regia *colla iugo*;
 erravit per prata vagus mala gramina pastus
 et qui homo bos fuerat de bove factus homo est.

The source of the episode, treated in Dan. 4. 22 and 29-33, is biblical, but the language draws on the classical literary repertoire. In the opening rhetorical question, the Ovidian *clausula* (shown here in italics) *regna tenentem* (from *met.* x. 15; XIII. 649; *Ib.* 327) and *esse bovem* (from *fast.* III. 658) are combined with Propertius' *quis neget esse* (IV. 2. 24) and Lucan's *decus imperii* (VII. 588 and IX. 747), both in the same metrical position. Nor can we ignore the suggestion of *Persarum statuit Babylona* (at the beginning of a hexameter in Prop. III. 11. 21) in the *incipit* of this passage, which also reuses Virgil's *mala gramina pastus* (*Aen.* II. 471) and picks up the (not rare) phrase *colla iugo* to complete a line that recalls *Paneg. in Mess.* 170 (*et colla iugo didicit summittere taurus*). Nonetheless, in this mosaic of overlapping and intersecting echoes that enhance the text of the poem, Ovid occupies an important position: v. 38 (*et qui homo bos fuerat de bove factus homo est*) is modeled on Ovid's *cum bos ex homine est, ex bove facta dea*, referring to Io transformed into a heifer (*her.* 14. 86).⁸² Moreover, shortly thereafter, in describing the Persian king's return to his human identity, Dracontius focuses in on the detail of the hand (vv. 45-46 *Sed qui restituit pecudis post membra tyrannum / ut fieret rediens ungula fissas manus*),

⁸² See also *fast.* v. 620 *quae bos ex homine est, ex bove facta dea* (this too referring to Io).

recalling Ovid's *met.* I. 741-742 (*redeunt umerique manusque / ungulaque in quinos dilapsa absumitur ungues*), the description of Io's return to human form. In other words, the story of Io in Ovid offers the poet a sort of pagan equivalent to that of Nebuchadnezzar, and Dracontius draws images and expressions from it.

Similarly, Ovid is the preferred hypotext for his digression on the *concordia discors* that opens the central section of the poem (vv. 55-90). The Empedoclean concept of the union of opposites had been repurposed according to the Christian vision,⁸³ but Dracontius, once again, even in the context of an argument with religious connotations, draws on Ovid. The indicator of the link with Ovid is the consonance of vv. 59-60 (*Sic elementa potens contraria miscuit auctor, / umida cum siccis, ignea cum gelidis*) with *met.* I. 18-20 (*corpore in uno / frigida pugnabant calidis, umentia siccis, / mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus*), hexameters that make up part of a broader passage on the origins of the universe. Dracontius reinforces the general assumption with a long series of examples that aim to demonstrate the coexistence of good and evil in creation. After a reference to letters (vv. 61-64), he systematically covers the elements of the earth (vv. 65-72), the sea (vv. 73-74), the heavens and the *aether* (vv. 75-88), specifically mentioning the five climatic zones (vv. 89-90). Ovid follows a similar scheme in the very passage to which we have referred (*met.* I. 10-68). In it, he speaks of the four elementary substances (water, earth, air and aether) at the origin of the various parts of the universe, and also explicitly mentions the climatic zones (*met.* I. 45-51). That Dracontius should have looked to Ovid's passage on the creation of the universe is not surprising; it appealed greatly to the Christian poets and Dracontius himself used it as a model in his *Laudes Dei*.⁸⁴ The coexistence of Christian argumentation and classical expression is surely a result of his schooling, if it is true that the African school system in the fifth century worked to harmonize pagan and Christian knowledge,⁸⁵ and it conveys the idea that the tradi-

⁸³ Cf. e.g. Aug. *enchir.* 3. 11; *de ordine* II. 4. 12.

⁸⁴ For Ovid's influence on the choices of Christian authors who treat the creation see Roberts 2002; for the Ovidian echoes in Dracontius' *de laudibus Dei* see Moussy in Camus – Moussy 1985, pp. 59-60.

⁸⁵ De Gaetano 2009, p. 96.

tion to which Dracontius refers and of which he aims to ensure the continuity is based on the integration of *Romanitas* and *Christianitas*.

However, for a poet struck down by power and seeking piety, Ovid's elegies in exile are an indisputable model, offering a significant precedent for the situation.⁸⁶ The *Satisfactio* shares the features of admission of guilt and hope for forgiveness with both the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. But the structure and argumentation of our poem underlie a constant reference to the long elegy of book II of the *Tristia*, a sort of 'open letter' – without parallels in Augustan poetry – addressed to the *principes* by the poet fallen into disgrace. The analogy of the situation behind the *Satisfactio* is immediately clear; the *loci similes* between the two texts, rarely supported by explicit verbal echoes,⁸⁷ have been repeatedly pointed out by scholars and we offer them here only out of the necessity of clarity: both poets identify poetry as the cause of their sentence,⁸⁸ recognize that they should have glorified the feats of their own respective sovereigns⁸⁹ and, in consideration of the fact that a single thing can both harm and

⁸⁶ The influence of Ovid's exile elegies has also been shown by Luceri 2015, pp. 279-286 in *laud.* III, 597-606, an autobiographical passage complaining the dramatis personae of the poet, abandoned by *parentes* and *propinqui*. On the more complex characteristics of Ovid's presence in *Rom.* VII, composed by Dracontius when he was in prison, see Stoehr-Monjou, pp. 382-387 in this volume.

⁸⁷ Cf. *trist.* II. 22 *exorant magnos carmina saepe deos ~ satisf.* 115 *exorent haec pauca deum*; *trist.* II. 31-32 *Sed nisi peccassem, quid tu concedere posses? / Materiam veniae sors tibi nostra dedit ~ satisf.* 297-298 *Materiam laudis praebet tibi culpa reorum / et titulos famae dat pietatis opus*.

⁸⁸ Ov. *trist.* II. 1-8 *Quid mihi vobiscum est, infelix cura, libelli, / ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo? / Cur modo damnatas repeto, mea crimina, Musas? / An semel est poenam commeruisse parum? / Carmina fecerunt, ut me cognoscere uellet / omine non fausto femina uirque meo: / carmina fecerunt, ut me moresque notaret / iam demi iussa Caesar ab Arte meos* and 61 *Quid referam libros, illos quoque, crimina nostra? ~ satisf.* 43-44 *Vulnera vexati curat sua lingua molossi, / heu mea quippe mihi vulnera lingua dedit; 93-94 culpa mihi fuerat ... / ignotumque mihi scribere vel dominum; 105-106 Te coram primum me carminis illius, ausu / quod male disposui, paenitet et fateor*.

⁸⁹ Ov. *trist.* II. 323-326 *Denique cum meritis impleveris omnia, Caesar, / pars mihi de multis una canenda fuit, / utque trahunt oculos radiantia lumina solis, / traxissent animum sic tua facta meum ~ satisf.* 21-25 *ut qui facta ducum possem narrare meorum, / nominis Asdingui bella triumphigera, / unde mihi merces posset cum laude salutis / munere regnantis magna venire simul, / praemia despicerem tacitis tot regibus almis*.

benefit,⁹⁰ nourish the hope that it will likewise be their poetic work to mitigate the wrath of their rulers.⁹¹ Like Dracontius, Ovid also recognizes the legitimacy of the wrath of the *princeps*⁹² and at the same time emphasizes that his guilt is an opportunity for Augustus to manifest his clemency;⁹³ not unlike the Christian God in Dracontius, Jupiter, willing to forgive, offers Ovid a role model for the *princeps*, which is his counterpart on earth.⁹⁴

Other elements common to both poems include the exaltation of the *clementia* of rulers toward enemies defeated in battle,⁹⁵ the use of the same *exempla*,⁹⁶ the author's hope of improving his

⁹⁰ Ov. *trist.* II. 19-20 *sic mihi res eadem vulnus opemque feret* and 266-274 *nihil prodest, quod non laedere possit idem. / Igne quid utilius? Siquis tamen urere tecta / comparat, audaces instruit igne manus. / Eripit interdum, modo dat medicina salutem, / quaeque iuvet, monstrat, quaeque sit herba nocens. / Et latro et cautus praecingitur ense viator; / ille sed insidias, hic sibi portat opem. / Discitur innocuas ut agat facundia causas; protegit haec sotes, immeritoque premit ~ satisf. 55-90.*

⁹¹ Ov. *trist.* II. 21 *Musaque, quam movit, motam quoque leniet iram* and 27-28 *His precor exemplis tua nunc, mitissime Caesar, / fiat ab ingenio mollior ira meo ~ satisf. 51-52 ... avi ut laudes dicam patriasque suasque / perque suas proles regia vota canam.*

⁹² Ov. *trist.* II. 29-30 *Illa quidem iusta est, nec me meruisse negabo / – non adeo nostro fugit ab ore pudor –* and 315 *nihil nisi peccatum manifesta culpa fatenda est ~ satisf. 53 Culpa quidem gravis est; 93 culpa mihi fuerat ...; 107 Post te, summe Deus, regi dominoque reus sum.*

⁹³ Ov. *trist.* II. 31-32 *sed nisi peccassem, quid tu concedere posses? / Materiam veniae sors tibi nostra dedit ~ satisf. 297-298 Materiem laudis praebebat tibi culpa reorum / et titulos famae dat pietatis opus.*

⁹⁴ Ov. *trist.* II. 39-40 *Tu quoque, cum patriae rector dicare paterque, / utere more dei nomen habentis idem ~ satisf. 149-151 Ignoscendo pius nobis imitare Tonantem, / qui indulget culpas et veniam tribuit. / Principis augusti simile est ad regna polorum.*

⁹⁵ Ov. *trist.* II. 43-50 *Tu veniam parti superatae saepe dedisti, / non concessurus quam tibi victor erat. / Divitiis etiam multos et honoribus auctos / vidi, qui tulerant in caput arma tuum; / quaeque dies bellum, belli tibi sustulit iram, / parsque simul templis utraque dona tulit; / utque tuus gaudet miles, quod vicerit hostem, / sic victum cur se gaudeat, hostis habet ~ satisf. 125-136 Qui pereunt bello soli moriuntur in hostes, / qui superest pugnae, vivat ut ipse, iubes. / Captivus securus agit solusque rebellis / formidat mortem, praeda quieta sedet. / Conservas animas, victum super ipse ministras, / ne sit vita gravis subripiante fame. / Nemo cadet sub iure tuo sub morte cruenta, / scit se victurum qui volet esse tuus. / Turba rebellantum quotiens oravit in armis / vinceret aut certe praeda fuisset iners. / Securus sine morte manus dat hostibus hostis, / nam bene conservas colla subacta iugo.*

⁹⁶ Ov. *trist.* II. 33-36 *Si, quotiens peccant homines, sua fulmina mittat / Iupiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit; / nunc ubi detonuit strepituque exterruit orbem, / purum discussis aëra reddit aquis ~ satisf. 293-294 Si iustis solem Dominus pluviasque dedisset / nec daret iniustis, quae fuerat pietas?*

situation⁹⁷ and the execration of the negative consequences on the *domus* of the punishment.⁹⁸ In Ovid, the references to guilt lead to the development of a long section on literature, in which the poet attempts to justify his work, in particular the *Ars*. He points out the distinction between conduct in life and poetry, and conducts a review of Greek and Latin literature to demonstrate that he is not the first to compose love poems though he is the first to be punished.

Lavinia Galli Milić has already observed that the strength of the *Satisfactio* lies in its integration of strategies of argumentation and intertextual references. She believes its similarities to *trist.* II support the comparison of Dracontius to Ovid and of Gunthamund to Augustus and offer the Vandal sovereign an opportunity to show himself to be more forgiving than Augustus by offering the pardon that the earlier poet was not granted. In my view, it is possible to take the comparison of the two texts further. We can begin with the observation that there are content parallels as well as congruity of strategies of argumentation. The influence of rhetorical precepts shows through in both poems. By a curious coincidence, Ovid too had studied law as a young man. In both poems the poet assumes a dual *ethos* as both the petitioner, who hopes for forgiveness or at least to improve his situation, and the *didaskalos*, who imparts a lesson in literary history in Ovid, and in political conduct in Dracontius. Both Ovid and Dracontius try to distance themselves from their guilt, one by attributing it to *sors*, the other to divine wrath and, drawing on the fundamental themes of Augustan or Vandal ideology, they develop a shrewd argumentative distinction

⁹⁷ Ov. *trist.* II. 181-186 *Parce, pater patriae, nec nominis immemor huius / olim placandi spem mihi tolle tui! / Non precor ut redeam, / quamvis maiora petitis / credibile est magnos saepe dedisse deos; / mitius exilium si das propiusque roganti, / pars erit ex poena magna levata mea* and 575-578 *Non ut in Ausoniam redeam, nisi forsitan olim, / cum longo poenae tempore victus eris: / tutius exilium pauloque quietius oro, / ut par delicto sit mea poena suo ~ satisf.* 119 *Da dextram misero, veniam concede precanti; 311-312 Da veniam, miserere, precor; succurre roganti, / pristina sufficiant verbera vincla fames.*

⁹⁸ Ov. *trist.* II. 109-110 *Illa nostra die, qua me malus abstulit error, / parva quidem periit, sed sine labe domus ~ satisf.* 282-287 *ecce etiam insontes noxia poena petit. / Si ipse ego peccavi, quaenam est, rogo, culpa meorum, / quos simul exagitat frigus inopsque fames? / Diluvio periere rei sine clade piorum; / Loth bonus et iustus tollitur ex Sodomis.*

between propaganda and reality in rule, and attempt to offer their respective sovereigns a binding pattern of behaviour, by presenting them with their duties and prompting them to maintain, in the specific situation, their widely publicized *clementia*.

Nor is that all. Ovid imparts a lesson in the history of literature. As a poet in disgrace he would not legitimately be able to speak of Augustus to the Romans, but he does make him a character in the *Tristia* and presents him to his audience, showing the inadequacy of the *princeps*' ideas on literature which led to his condemnation of the *Ars*.⁹⁹ Dracontius does something similar: while addressing the sovereign he also speaks of Gunthamund as king, and shows the inappropriate exercise of power that led to his sentencing.¹⁰⁰ In other words, like *Tristia* II, the *Satisfactio* does not welcome a unique interpretation; its message varies according to the perspective from which we look at it. If Gunthamund is the addressee then the aim is forgiveness and the poem is to be read as a poem of reparation; if Gunthamund is the subject, then the poem, while conforming in part to the form of the panegyric, effectively seeks to reveal the tyranny of his power. The final interpretation is up to the reader of the time, who has a critical role to play; although Dracontius' poem was composed in prison, its circulation among the members of the African elite is not out of the question, if it is true that the epithalamium for Ioannis and Vitulae was also composed during Dracontius' imprisonment.

All in all, the analogy between the texts of Ovid and Dracontius is not only in *loci similes*, but in the underlying parameters of the two compositions; indeed, an understanding of Ovid could provide the real key to interpreting the *Satisfactio*. Thus, while there is no lack of references to other authors, it is Ovid who, in tone, situation and type of argumentation, remains the chosen model for the *Satisfactio*, a composition that is political even more than it is religious, that employs complex strategies of argumentation and admits two possible interpretations.

⁹⁹ For this reading of *Tristia* II see Barchiesi 1993.

¹⁰⁰ See above, p. 344.

* In this article it was not possible to consider the book *Transformations of Ovid in Late Antiquity* by Ian Fielding, who at pp. 89-127 analyses the role that the *Satisfactio* accords Ovid. In fact, when Fielding's book was published, at the end of 2017, this essay had already been delivered for publication.

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Abstract

The *Satisfactio*, a composition that is political even more than it is religious, employs complex strategies of argumentation conveyed by the skilful fusion of rhetorical knowledge and literary models. We can consider the poem as akin to a *deprecatio* and Dracontius, in his Christianized treatment of certain *topoi* of the panegyric tradition, in one way aligns himself with the propaganda of the Vandals, but in another attempts to direct it, and traces a sort of *speculum principis*. Moreover the contrast between the sovereign's propaganda and his real exercise of power casts the shadow of tyranny over Gunthamund; the key element that would make the transformation of tyranny possible is the culture, the source of *pietas* for the sovereign and of civilization for barbarians. Thus the poet claims for the Roman cultural tradition the role of an instrument of integration between the Romans and the Vandals, and for himself, as a man of letters, the role of cultural mediator. In the construction of the *Satisfactio*, the use of the classics conveys the central role of tradition. While there is no lack of references to other authors, it

is Ovid who remains the chosen model. Both the description of the double metamorphosis of Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 31-38) and the passage on the *concordia discors* (vv. 55-90) prove that the presence of Ovid goes beyond the elegies from exile. However, the structure and argumentation of our poem underlie a constant reference to the long elegy of book II of the *Tristia*. There are content parallels, rarely supported by explicit verbal echoes, as well as congruity of strategies of argumentation. In fact, like *Tristia* II, the message of *Satisfactio* varies according to the perspective from which we look at it: if Gunthamund is the addressee then the aim is forgiveness and the poem is to be read as a poem of reparation; if Gunthamund is the subject, effectively the poem seeks to reveal the tyranny of his power. The final interpretation is up to the reader, who has a critical role to play and to whom the understanding of *Tristia* II could provide the real key to interpreting the *Satisfactio*.

ANNICK STOEHR-MONJOU

OVIDE DANS L'ŒUVRE PROFANE
DE DRACONTIUS :
UNE INFLUENCE PARADOXALE ?
DU MICROCOSME DU VERS
AU MACROCOSME DES POÈMES

En 1982, à partir des *loci similes* de Rossberg et Vollmer,¹ Jean Bouquet étudie l'imitation d'Ovide dans l'ensemble de l'œuvre chrétienne et antique de Dracontius, le plus important poète d'Afrique vandale :² Dracontius y imite surtout les *Métamorphoses*, et dans une moindre mesure les œuvres érotiques, sans que les autres pièces soient pour autant absentes.³ Jean Bouquet relève trois caractéristiques de l'insertion d'Ovide dans le texte tardif : l'importance de la coupe et du schéma métrique ovidiens sur Dracontius, le mécanisme de la mémoire qui produit un mécanisme de duplication d'Ovide par Ovide, et surtout la volonté d'illustrer son propos par un rapprochement éclairant.⁴ Il montre ainsi que Dracontius veut assumer l'héritage païen dans toute son œuvre, et donne l'image d'un Ovide poète badin et léger mais aussi d'un 'penseur dont les idées doivent être prises au sérieux et méritent éventuellement la contradiction' dans les pièces chrétiennes.⁵ Puis il conclut sur l'importance d'Ovide comme poète de la mythologie, de l'amour et de l'exil pour Dracontius.

¹ Rossberg 1880 ; Vollmer 1905 *ad loc.*

² Bouquet 1982, pp. 178-187. Les lignes qui suivent résument cet article qui constitue un point de départ essentiel à cette étude.

³ Bouquet 1982, pp. 178-180. La vue d'ensemble est juste ; cependant les statistiques qu'il donne ne sont pas toujours précises et il procède à quelques raccourcis parfois problématiques : par exemple pour les épithalames, il écrit que Dracontius procède à sept emprunts aux *Métamorphoses* sans en donner les références.

⁴ Bouquet 1982, pp. 180-184.

⁵ Bouquet 1982, p. 186.

Pour prolonger et nuancer la réflexion de Jean Bouquet, je centrerai mon propos sur la partie profane de la poésie de Dracontius qui a moins gêné le savant français car il lui semble implicitement naturel d'y insérer Ovide alors qu'il peut qualifier tel souvenir ovidien dans les *Louanges de Dieu* de 'fortuit' voire d' 'incongru' !⁶ Pourtant, bien que l'essentiel de son œuvre profane concerne le mythe, bien qu'une communauté de destin rapproche les deux poètes – la relégation pour Ovide, la prison pour Dracontius –, le poète carthaginois ne revendique pas l'influence d'Ovide en citant le nom du poète de Sulmone. Or il le fait pour Stace, Homère et Virgile.⁷ Pourquoi ce silence ?

Mon hypothèse est que l'influence d'Ovide sur la poésie profane de Dracontius a une dimension paradoxale qui l'amène à prendre ses distances, voire à le désavouer dans le macrocosme des poèmes, alors qu'il en est profondément nourri dans le microcosme du vers. Pour comprendre comment Dracontius travaille le texte ovidien dans ses poèmes profanes et en nourrit son esthétique, je me suis appuyée sur mes recherches personnelles, les *loci similes* de Vollmer et Rossberg toujours utiles et sur les éditions récentes – qui malheureusement, à l'exception de celle d'Antonino Grillone, ne donnent pas de liste des sources de Dracontius.⁸ Dans la première partie, j'étudierai le travail d'orfèvre de Dra-

⁶ Cf. Bouquet 1982, p. 180 respectivement à propos de *laud.* I. 284 ~ *her.* 10. 1, *laud.* III. 647 ~ *ars* III. 378 et *laud.* I. 284 ~ *her.* 10. 1. Ce jugement me semble erroné : l'imitation d'un grand poète donne une valeur intrinsèque au vers, voir *infra*.

⁷ Dracontius nomme Stace dont il cite la *Thébaïde* (*laud.* III. 262) et il invoque Homère et Virgile pour *Le Rapt d'Hélène* (*Romul.* 8. 12-23).

⁸ J'ai repris les *loci similes* de ma thèse de 2007 (vol. 2, Annexes, pp. 858-892), résultats de ma propre recherche *systématique* pour tous les poèmes profanes de Dracontius sauf pour les quatre poèmes épiques (*Romul.* 4, 8, 10 et *Orest.*) en raison de leur taille et de l'existence d'éditions récentes : Bouquet 1995 et Wolff 1996 pour l'ensemble des œuvres profanes, Weber 1995 pour *Romul.* 2, Kaufmann 2006 pour *Romul.* 10 et Grillone 2008 pour l'*Orestis*. Kaufmann 2006, pp. 45-47 juge l'intertextualité inutile pour comprendre Dracontius tout en citant de nombreux textes, dont on ne comprend pas toujours le statut par rapport à notre poète ; Grillone 2008, pp. 199-207 offre une précieuse double liste des *fontes*. Pour les quatre poèmes épiques, j'ai donc centré mes recherches personnelles d'intertextes sur les *prooemia* programmatiques, les comparaisons épiques et les vers d'or. L'écriture de détail de Dracontius amène à être modeste : il est imprudent d'affirmer en avoir fait le tour ! C'est pourquoi je ne donne pas des statistiques sur le nombre des réminiscences par poème mais des tendances esthétiques.

contius qui établit un dialogue érudit avec son lecteur, appelé à reconnaître l'influence ovidienne dans le microcosme du vers. Dans la deuxième partie, j'analyserai le dialogue avec Ovide dans le macrocosme des poèmes et la manière dont Dracontius prend ses distances avec lui.

PREMIÈRE PARTIE : OVIDE DANS LE MICROCOSME DU VERS, UN DIALOGUE ÉRUDIT AVEC LE LECTEUR

Le vers est le premier matériau essentiel pour comprendre le travail d'*imitatio* / *aemulatio*⁹ mais aussi de lecture, par Dracontius d'Ovide, par le lecteur de Dracontius.¹⁰

I. *Modalités de l'imitation au niveau du vers : Ovide, un joyau pour l'orfèvre tardif*¹¹

Je voudrais montrer que, quel que soit le degré d'imitation, la présence d'Ovide donne plus de valeur au vers car elle est un joyau que retravaille l'orfèvre.

A. Prédilection pour le mètre épique ovidien

L'importance de l'Ovide des *Métamorphoses* dans toutes les pièces de Dracontius, chrétiennes ou profanes, à sujet mythologique ou non, indique bien que cette partie de l'œuvre du poète augustéen était particulièrement goûtée au temps de Dracontius : le lecteur aime la reconnaître. En outre, cette œuvre a un statut 'scolaire' et Dracontius sait ainsi qu'il touche un public plus large en l'imitant. Enfin, la prédilection pour les *Métamorphoses* revient aussi au choix du genre noble de l'épopée puisque les autres œuvres

⁹ Cf. Thill 1979 ; Charlet 1988, pp. 75-77 (= *Id.* 2008, pp. 160-161) distingue d'une part la reprise d'une expression entrée dans la *koinè* poétique, l'emprunt métrique ou l'emprunt d'une *iunctura* (nom-adjectif ou verbe et complément) et d'autre part les emprunts qui en outre révèlent une volonté d'*aemulatio* ou de *retractatio*.

¹⁰ Nicastrì 1999, p. 871 rappelle que deux critères interagissent quand la culture chrétienne se mesure à la culture païenne : le choix impliquant le jugement (*krisis*) et l'utilisation (*chrèsis*).

¹¹ Cette partie est naturellement influencée par l'ouvrage fondamental de Roberts 1989 sur le *Jeweled Style*.

d'Ovide sont rédigées en distiques élégiaques, alors que Dracontius privilégie l'hexamètre, à l'exception de la *Satisfactio* et du *De origine rosarum*, qui justement constituent une *aemulatio* avec Ovide exilé ou poète érotique.¹²

Jean Bouquet note que la part relative des *Métamorphoses* diminue progressivement entre *Hylas* et l'*Orestis* qui sont composés respectivement au début de la carrière de Dracontius puis plus tard : cependant si l'on ne peut nier que les 'sources d'inspiration ovidiennes du poète se sont diversifiées', la seule explication par la maturation du poète ne suffit pas :¹³ la taille même de chaque pièce (163 vers pour *Hylas*, 974 vers pour l'*Orestis*) et les intentions poétiques variées expliquent aisément cette différence et l'impossibilité de tout emprunter aux seules *Métamorphoses*. En outre, si la part proportionnelle de réminiscences des *Métamorphoses* est moindre, on peut se demander si Dracontius ne cherche pas à rivaliser de manière plus subtile avec Ovide : par la métrique. En effet, Lucio Ceccarelli souligne à différents niveaux une différence dans le travail sur l'hexamètre entre les *Romulea* et l'*Orestis* [*tragoedia*], les *Laudes Dei* étant souvent plus proches de l'*Orestis*.¹⁴ Ainsi, l'hexamètre des *Romulea* est plus proche de l'épopée flavienne, surtout de Stace, alors que l'hexamètre de l'*Orestis* se rapproche d'Ovide :¹⁵ le dactyle y est préféré, et particulièrement au premier pied ; le schéma DDSS y est privilégié – c'est également le cas dans les *Laudes* – alors que dans les *Romulea* est placé en tête, comme chez Stace, le schéma équilibré DSDD ;¹⁶ on retrouve la même fréquence du type holodactylique (DDDD),¹⁷ le même purisme pour la présence de la césure

¹² Stoechr-Monjou 2014a.

¹³ J. Bouquet (1982, p. 179) estime que 'au fur et à mesure [...] son art acquerrait plus de richesse et de maturité'. Les huit emprunts à Ovide viennent tous des *Métamorphoses* dans *Hylas* (*Romul.* 2) tandis que dans l'*Orestis*, ce sont 34 emprunts sur 54.

¹⁴ Ceccarelli 2008, pp. 141-213, en particulier pp. 142-144, 146, 149, 183 note 57, 189.

¹⁵ Ceccarelli 2008, pp. 149-150 pour Ovide, pp. 150-151 pour Stace ; t. 2, tab. 35 p. 83 pour une vision synthétique très claire.

¹⁶ Ceccarelli 2008, pp. 70, 143-144, 153-154 ; Charlet 2015, p. 144.

¹⁷ Sur le schéma DDDD chez les poètes tardifs, cf. Ceccarelli 2008, pp. 155-156. En revanche Dracontius n'imite pas le goût d'Ovide pour le schéma en chiasme DSDD, cf. Charlet 2015, p. 146.

au troisième pied.¹⁸ Ainsi Ovide constitue un matériau textuel et métrique important pour notre poète tardif. Si l'on considère à présent les différentes manières de pratiquer l'*imitatio-aemulatio* au niveau du vers, on constate que Dracontius joue de toutes les possibilités qui lui sont offertes.

B. Ovide et le style de joaillerie (*Jeweled Style*) ; goût pour la *contaminatio*

Quelle que soit la nature de l'emprunt, sauf dans le cas d'une *retractatio* où le texte d'origine est plus subtilement caché, toute reprise, avant même d'apporter du sens au texte, contribue à donner du prestige au vers, à le rendre plus précieux que si la réminiscence était absente. Un vers contenant un écho d'Ovide reste un simple vers pour qui ne le reconnaît pas, alors que, même s'il semble anodin, quand le lecteur reconnaît la musique d'Ovide à laquelle nous sommes moins sensibles, il entend un vers plus raffiné. Une caractéristique de la poétique de Dracontius est l'accumulation.¹⁹ Nous verrons justement dans cette étude qu'une des modalités typiques de l'imitation d'Ovide est la contamination (d'Ovide par Ovide ou par un autre poète),²⁰ qui renforce le caractère précieux du vers. Ainsi, même dans une épigramme de 24 vers, Dracontius concentre deux réminiscences ovidiennes en un seul vers afin de mettre en valeur une idée qui lui est chère, celle du retour du printemps.²¹ Sa prédilection pour cette saison rejoint une préoccupation spirituelle, l'évocation du jardin d'Eden où il est éternel.²² En outre, la pratique de l'imitation,

¹⁸ Ovide offre 0,06% d'exceptions et Dracontius aucune dans l'*Orestis*, 0,04% dans les *Romulea* et 0,17% dans les *Laudes*. Cf. Charlet 2015, p. 151.

¹⁹ Stoechr-Monjou à paraître c.

²⁰ La contamination permet aussi de toucher un public plus large car elle multiplie les chances que le public reconnaisse au moins une réminiscence – même si en ce cas, il n'y a qu'une perception partielle du phénomène. Ce point permet de rappeler l'existence de plusieurs niveaux de compréhension possibles par le public de Dracontius.

²¹ Dracontius les remploie en même place métrique : *Drac. mens.* 7 *Post chaos expulsum ridet* *primordia mundi* contamine *Ov. fast.* v. 11 *post chaos* et *met.* xv. 67 *primordia mundi*. Cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2013b, p. 133.

²² Cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2013b, p. 145. Dans les *Louanges de Dieu*, Dracontius s'inspire du printemps de l'âge d'or ovidien relu à travers un paradis de Prudence :

qu'elle soit unique ou redoublée dans la *contaminatio*, rejoint le goût tardo-antique pour les matériaux précieux et leur accumulation : vers et objets matériels révèlent une même esthétique raffinée.

C. *Imitatio* du vers ovidien dans son schéma métrique

1. Coupe

Jean Bouquet a relevé l'importance de schémas métriques ovidiens sur Dracontius. Il note en particulier qu'il est sensible à la reprise en même place des alliances, notamment à la coupe.²³

Il emploie *liuor edax* à la césure penthémimère comme Ovide²⁴ dans l'*Épithalame aux frères*,²⁵ mais aussi dans les *Louanges de Dieu* pour décrire le serpent tentateur.²⁶ Dans l'épithalame, Vénus prononce l'éloge de la famille des mariés, constate qu'ils ne sont pas sujets à l'envie dévorante ni au désir de pouvoir : *non ibi liuor edax, non est elata potestas* (*Romul.* 6. 85). Or non seulement Dracontius reprend l'expression à la même place métrique qu'Ovide mais cela l'amène à choisir pour ce vers le schéma métrique privilégié dans les *Métamorphoses* (DDSS) qui est second dans les *Romulea*, après le schéma équilibré DSDS.²⁷ De plus, Dracontius emploie une *iunctura* entrée dans la *koinè* poétique (soit à cette même place, soit en début de vers) et présente quatre fois chez des chrétiens avant deux emplois chez Dracontius ; il s'inspire

Ov. *met.* 1. 107 : *uer aeternum* ; Prud. *cath.* 3. 103 : *uer perpetuum* ; Drac. *laud.* 1. 185 : *sub uere perenni* et *laud.* 1. 199 *uer ibi perpetuum* inspiré de *met.* v. 391 *perpetuum uer est* (lieu où Proserpine est enlevée).

²³ Bouquet 1982, pp. 180-181.

²⁴ Ov. *am.* 1. 15. 1 *Quid mihi, Liuor edax, ignauos obicis annos ? et rem.* 389 *Rumpere, liuor edax ; magnum iam nomen habemus.*

²⁵ J. Bouquet (1982, p. 181) a fort bien analysé l'emploi de *liuor edax* choisi pour son épithète, pour 'l'apostrophe animée en début de vers et la place de la coupe qui souligne le mot *edax*'. Il modifie en revanche à tort la situation du v. 85 en affirmant que 'Vénus adresse ses vœux aux jeunes époux et interdit à l'Envie de franchir le seuil de leur maison'.

²⁶ J. Bouquet ne signale pas Drac. *laud.* 1. 463 *Ergo ibi liuor edax, coctum serpente uenenum*. Galli Milic 2008, p. 230 considère que Dracontius s'auto-imité plutôt qu'il n'imité Ovide où le passage est métalittéraire.

²⁷ Voir *supra* et la synthèse de Charlet 2015, pp. 144-145 à partir de Ceccarelli 2008.

justement de Paulin de Périgueux pour l'autre emploi de *liuor edax* à propos du serpent tentateur.²⁸ Et ici, il célèbre la famille des mariés pour ses vertus chrétiennes.²⁹ L'auto-imitation dépasse la frontière entre pièces profanes et chrétiennes.

2. Vers à coupe triple a

De fait, Dracontius imite aussi parfois une structure plus raffinée ou solennelle du vers. Je reviendrai plus loin sur le *versus aureus* et m'attacherai ici à la reprise d'un vers à couple triple a. Ainsi, toujours dans l'*Épithalame aux frères*, il s'inspire d'un hémistiche imité d'Ovide : non seulement le mot *amor* est mis en valeur à la coupe hephthémimère mais dans un vers à coupe triple a qui souligne la solennité de l'éloge :

Ov. *met.* VI. 469

facundum // faciēbat // amor // quotiensque rogabat

Drac. *Romul.* 6. 4

*facundos // uos fecit // amor. // Venus alma, potestas*³⁰

²⁸ La *iunctura* a en effet connu un certain succès. Lucain reprend *liuor edax* en début de vers (I. 288). On relève ensuite trois modèles métriques : on la lit à la même place qu'Ovide trois fois (Mart. *epigr.* XI. 33. 3 ; Rust. *Help. hist. testam.* 9. 2 [tristiqué à propos des frères de Joseph qui, poussés par l'envie, le vendent] ; Paul. Petric. *Mart.* II. 44) avant Dracontius (*laud.* I. 463 et *Romul.* 6. 85) ; à la même place que Lucain, on la lit deux fois (Paul. Nol. *carm.* 28. 287 et Alc. Avit. *carm.* III. 185) et une fois en fin de vers (Cypr. Gall. *iud.* 462). Dracontius connaît Paulin de Périgueux et l'imité dans les *Louanges de Dieu* (cf. Moussy 1988, p. 66 et n. 6). Ainsi *laud.* I. 463-464 : *ergo ibi liuor edax, coc-tum serpente uenenum / inuidiae mordacis habens sub fronte modesta* me semble un souvenir de Paul. Petric. *Mart.* II. 44-45 *Quosdam liuor edax nigrantis felle ueneni / inficit*. Il s'agit dans les deux cas de l'action du diable qui touche l'homme par l'envie et la convoitise ; chez Paulin, cela désigne ceux qui ne croient pas aux miracles de Martin. Camus 1985, p. 300 à I. 463 renvoie à un verset biblique (Sap. 2. 24) et à une exégèse patristique bien attestée sur l'envie qui causa la chute de Satan.

²⁹ Stoehr-Monjou 2015c, pp. 270-272.

³⁰ Les mots en même place métrique sont en italique et ils sont soulignés quand ils sont repris à une autre place ou qu'ils jouent par *aemulatio/retractatio* avec l'intertexte ovidien. Les éditions suivies sont, sauf mention contraire, celles de la CUF pour les deux poètes. Pour Dracontius : Camus 1985, Moussy 1985, Moussy 1988, Bouquet 1995, Wolff 1996) ; pour Ovide : André 1963, André 2003a (1968), André 2003b (1968), Bornecque-Prévost 1961², Bornecque 2003a (1930), Bornecque 2003b (1930), Bornecque-Heuzé 1994, Lafaye-Fabre 1999, Lafaye-Le Bonniec 1999, Lafaye-Le Bonniec 2000, Saint Denis 1974, Schilling 2003 (1993).

Un amour légitime confère ainsi aux fiancés une exceptionnelle qualité d'éloquence, ce qui constitue une *retractatio* assez étonnante d'Ovide, qui parlait de l'éloquence impie de Térée. Lavinia Galli Milić commente ce vers en parlant de 'la technique de la citation paradoxale'.³¹

3. Clausule, contamination

Dans le *Rapt d'Hélène*, Priam fait des sacrifices à Jupiter et Minerve, le jour de leur fête (*Romul.* 8. 82). Dracontius emprunte la clausule *sacra Mineruae* à un vers des *Fastes* qui introduit l'explication pour le *quinquatrus*, fête en l'honneur de cette même déesse :³²

Ov. *fast.* III. 809

Vna dies media est et fiunt *sacra Mineruae*

epiced. Drusi 21-22

soluere uota Ioui / mater, et *armiferæ soluere uota deæ.*

Drac. *Romul.* 8. 82

reddere uota Ioui, laturus *sacra Mineruae*

L'écho ovidien donne de la dignité et de la solennité à un vers de Dracontius dont l'énoncé proprement dit est par ailleurs plutôt banal.³³ Dracontius rivalise aussi avec la *Consolation à Livie* dans le début de ce même vers puisqu'il reprend le schéma métrique d'un infinitif (*soluere* / *reddere*) suivi de *uota Ioui* puis

³¹ Galli Milić 2008, p. 53.

³² Cf. Ov. *fast.* III. 809.

³³ Cependant les vers d'Ovide qui précèdent (*fast.* III. 793-808) à la fin de la partie sur les *Liberalia*, qui sont l'étiologie de la métamorphose du milan en constellation, inspirent Dracontius dans un passage postérieur (rapprochement de Simons 2005, p. 267 qui ne voit pas celui de *Romul.* 8. 82) : le milan poursuit des colombes et des cygnes (*Romul.* 8. 453-457), ce qu'un augure interprète comme le présage d'un terrible destin pour Pâris (*Romul.* 8. 465 *promittunt genitam sed miluus horrida fata*) ; le milan est assimilé à Pâris en tant que *rap-toris* (*Romul.* 8. 477), souvenir de la légende justement rapportée par Ovide : le milan fut récompensé par Jupiter pour avoir dérobé à Briarée les chairs d'un taureau permettant de vaincre les dieux (*fast.* III. 807 *Iuppiter alitibus rapere imperat*). Le mécanisme de mémoire est intéressant : Dracontius situe ce passage précisément lors d'une autre fête religieuse, celle pour la naissance de Vénus à Chypre (*Romul.* 8. 435), après celle en l'honneur de Minerve (Drac. *Romul.* 8. 82 / Ov. *fast.* III. 809 : le 19 mars), et en s'inspirant de celle de Bacchus (Ov. *fast.* III. 713-808 : le 17 mars). Sur ce présage, voir aussi *infra* p. 373 note 45.

de la mention de Minerve (*armiferae deae*). Mais une question reste en suspens : dans la mesure où ce poème a été attribué à Ovide, Dracontius croit-il l'imiter ? est-il le relais d'une attribution antique de ce texte au poète de Sulmone ? S'il pense imiter Ovide, il procède à une contraction en un seul vers et met en valeur son propos par la contamination :³⁴ en rendant ce vers encore plus 'ovidien', il attire l'attention sur sa signification. En l'occurrence, ce jour de fête sera un jour de malheur et l'influence ovidienne a donc une dimension paradoxale. Cet exemple est également révélateur du mécanisme de mémoire et de la technique d'écriture du poète carthaginois.

4. Clausule et *color*

Par ailleurs, lorsque la réminiscence ovidienne éclaire le sens du poème, elle contribue souvent à renforcer la tonalité du poème : le *color* de la gemme ovidienne vient illuminer le texte tardif. Les exemples en sont innombrables dans toutes les pièces.³⁵ J'en retiendrai ici deux tirés de poèmes moins étudiés, à la croisée entre rhétorique et épopée : la controverse (*Romul.* 5) et la suasoire (*Romul.* 9). Dans la controverse sur la statue du riche, l'orateur défend le pauvre contre le riche citoyen qui veut sa mort. Aux vv. 56-69, il évoque les clients du riche, au nombre desquels le *pauper* n'a pas été admis. Pourtant il serait dévoué à son patron au point de se laisser accuser à sa place d'un crime, de subir les supplices de l'interrogatoire et du châtiment, et même de dissimuler ce crime : *crimina celet* (*Romul.* 5. 69). Or c'est aussi une manière d'accuser le riche citoyen de crimes. La clausule que je viens de citer reprend une clausule ovidienne qui n'est pas imitée par ailleurs. Pélée exilé pour avoir tué son frère Phocus est accueilli chez le roi Ceyx, lui-même endeuillé par la mort de son frère, mais il lui cache la cause de son exil quand il lui conte son

³⁴ Bouquet 1982, p. 182 parle de 'mécanisme de duplication' pour d'autres passages car il se place du point de vue du mécanisme de la mémoire, avec l'idée qu'un souvenir d'Ovide en fait venir un autre. L'analyse de Nicastri 1999, p. 871 qui rappelle l'importance du choix et du jugement ainsi que de l'utilisation invite à prendre aussi en considération l'effet recherché.

³⁵ En *Romul.* 6. 35, Dracontius choisit un vers holodactylique à propos de Phèdre et Ariane aimées de Thésée (*Ov. her.* 4. 143) et le contamine à la clausule de *met.* II. 559 afin de louer les deux sœurs qu'épousent les deux frères, cf. Stochr-Monjou 2015c, pp. 269-270.

histoire : *tantum sua crimina celat / mentiturque fugae causam* (Ov. *met.* XI. 280-281). Le souvenir d'Ovide, qui dédouble le thème du meurtre fratricide, renforce chez Dracontius la dénonciation du riche comme impie qui parcourt tout le poème depuis l'*incipit*.³⁶ Dans la *suasoria*, un autre exemple me semble intéressant car il concerne une pièce d'Ovide moins imitée, *Ibis*. Il s'agit d'un passage rappelant la coutume des Perses pour lesquels laisser les cadavres aux oiseaux est une marque d'honneur : [...] *et ad Persas honor est, si membra uolucres / eripiant* (*Romul.* 9. 80-81). Dracontius relativise ainsi la portée de l'injure qu'Achille veut infliger à Hector. Or ce bref *exemplum* est l'occasion d'insérer une réminiscence ovidienne qui sonne comme une menace : *siue peregrinae carpent mea membra uolucres* (Ov. *Ib.* 149). Dracontius passe d'une énumération d'hypothèses avec *siue* à un seul cas. La clause *membra uolucres* et le système conditionnel rappellent le poète imaginant que, victime d'*Ibis*, sans sépulture, s'il est la proie des oiseaux, il viendra hanter son ennemi intime. Ainsi *membra uolucres* est une allusion érudite à une vengeance, un châtiment contre Achille, thème que l'on retrouve un peu plus loin (*Romul.* 5. 93-95) puis qui est développé avec les menaces d'Éaque (*Romul.* 5. 124-140). L'écriture de Dracontius est donc ici allusive, joue d'effets d'échos qui se répondent et l'emprunt littéraire subtil rehausse le propos apparemment banal.

Outre l'emprunt métrique en ses diverses modalités, une particularité du style de Dracontius, l'oxymoron, est également influencée par Ovide.

D. L'oxymoron

L'antithèse est chère à Dracontius : on peut y lire une influence de l'enseignement rhétorique, et des Évangiles, comme dans les récits de guérison. De fait, elle a chez lui une valeur poétique et spirituelle profonde car elle exprime la complexité du monde.³⁷ Il est donc assez naturel que Dracontius goûte plus particulièrement l'oxymoron, qui est un concentré expressif d'antithèse.

³⁶ L'influence de Lucain est à cet égard essentielle, cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2016b.

³⁷ Ce, même à travers le motif du salut du corps et de l'âme, cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2006 et à paraître c.

Il emprunte des oxymorons à divers poètes tels Lucrèce, Sénèque, Paulin de Nole, Prudence.³⁸ Cependant il me semble que l'influence d'Ovide est plus fréquente et plus profonde, ce qui correspond à l'esthétique de ce dernier. J'insisterai ici sur un type d'oxymoron fréquent dans l'œuvre de Dracontius, celui du criminel impie agissant par *pietas*, qui vient justement d'Ovide. Les formulations sont variables et j'en citerai deux. Dracontius emprunte à Ovide le jeu étymologique *impietate pia* et la même place métrique, en attaque de vers :

Ov. *met.* VIII. 477

impietate pia est ; nam postquam pestifer ignis

Drac. *Romul.* 5. 257

impietate pius ne Claudius esset adulter

Drac. *Orest.* 8

impietate pium, reprobæ probitatis Orestem

Il s'agit de l'épisode d'Althée³⁹ qui venge ses propres frères en tuant son fils Méléagre responsable de leur mort ; la mère infanticide est alors désignée en début de vers comme *impietate pia est* (*met.* VIII. 477). Dracontius l'emprunte à deux reprises au masculin – l'ordre chronologique entre le poème épique et la controverse n'est pas certain et je commencerai par le cas où l'analogie est limpide. Dans son *prooemium* de l'*Orestis*, Dracontius désigne Oreste matricide comme *impietate pium* (*Orest.* 8). Althée et Oreste ont chacun tué un membre de leur famille pour venger le meurtre d'un autre membre. Dracontius fait de ce vers la clé de lecture du poème qui a pour objet de justifier Oreste. Dans la controverse, l'oxymoron désigne Verginius qui tue sa fille pour la sauver du déshonneur (*Romul.* 5. 257). Ce même comportement est en revanche dénoncé dans les *Louanges de Dieu* où l'*exemplum* historique de Virginius illustre l'excès de patriotisme au prix du sacrifice de sa propre enfant (*laud.* III. 344-361). Il est signifiant que l'oxymoron soit absent ici car Dracontius condamne le meurtre dans ce contexte précis : par sa

³⁸ Par exemple : *laud.* I. 648 et Prud. *apoth.* 756 ; *laud.* III. 4 et Lucr. II. 1054 ; *laud.* III. 43 et Paul. Nol. *carm.* 18. 255 ; *Romul.* 7. 13 et Sen. *Phaedr.* 275.

³⁹ Bouquet 1982, pp. 183-184 relève quatre mentions de l'épisode. Voir *infra* 2^e Partie, II C.

beauté formelle, l'oxymoron confère de la noblesse à ce crime, ce qu'il refuse dans certains cas. Ainsi, peu avant ce passage des *Louanges*, Dracontius évoque Brutus meurtrier de son propre fils. Il choisit un oxymoron différent qui oppose le père et le citoyen : *Horror amorque nouus, ciuis pius, impius auctor* (*laud.* III. 325). Cet exemple confirme la force expressive de l'emprunt à Ovide que Dracontius est le seul à faire. Oreste est *impietate pius* car c'est *par* son crime impie qu'il manifeste sa *pietas* envers Agamemnon.

Ovide a aussi employé un oxymoron pour désigner les filles de Pélidas qui causent la mort de leur père par piété filiale en croyant le rajeunir : *Pellae natas pietate nocentes* (*Ov. her.* 12. 129). Dracontius reprend à la même place métrique cette fin de vers tirée de la lettre de Médée à Jason dans une comparaison épique : le fauve suit le chemin de celui qui lui a enlevé ses petits, trompé qu'il est dans son amour : *et elusa feritas pietate nocentis / raptoris sectatur iter* (*Romul.* 8. 579). La construction est cependant très différente puisque *pietate* concerne l'animal et *nocentis* le chasseur. Dans cette comparaison épique où la fureur d'une tigresse privée de ses petits sert à exprimer la force du chagrin de Ménélas après le rapt de sa femme, l'emprunt ovidien révèle donc le goût pour ce type d'oxymoron, ici détourné pour enrichir le vers. Enfin *nocentis* désigne aussi par analogie Pâris mais il reste le criminel honni du *prooemium* et n'est pas jugé digne par Dracontius de la recherche esthétique que constitue l'oxymoron. L'oxymoron révèle donc aussi le jugement du poète et a une signification esthétique et éthique, ce que nous reverrons pour les morts de Clytemnestre et Agamemnon.

II. *L'auto-imitation*

Je voudrais à présent montrer plus systématiquement un élément ébauché dans ce qui précède : Ovide contribue à créer une œuvre unifiée à travers l'auto-imitation. Dracontius peut s'inspirer d'un même vers ovidien plusieurs fois dans son œuvre. Je relève deux modalités : il reprend la même alliance ou au contraire s'inspire de mots différents.

A. Jeux de variation en miroir d'Ovide

Lorsqu'il goûte une *iunctura*, Dracontius aime à la remployer. Or il est aussi des *iuncturae* qu'Ovide lui-même a retravaillées différemment dans son œuvre, phénomène qui a visiblement influencé notre poète. Le premier exemple me semble révélateur du sens de la musicalité ovidienne chez les poètes tardifs.

Ovide a créé l'alliance *mala fata* dans *am.* III. 9. 35 *cum rapiunt mala fata bonos (ignoscite fasso)* puis, dans une épître élégiaque, il la place après la première syllabe longue du dactyle 4^e et avant un mot trisyllabique. Hypsipylé y explique pourquoi elle accueille, pour son malheur, Jason (*Ov. her.* 6. 51).⁴⁰ Dracontius imite deux fois ce schéma métrique, que l'on peut lire aussi dans un *carmen epigraphicum* et chez Corippe :⁴¹

Ov. her. 6. 51

sed me *mala fata* trahebant

Lucan. x. 101

Iam *tibi* – sed procul hoc auertant *fata* – *minatur*

Drac. Romul. 4. 2

cur *mihi* uiperei fetus *mala fata* *minantur*

Drac. Romul. 8. 156

Vos repetunt mortis, in uos *mala fata* feruntur

Dans l'éthopée d'Hercule face à l'Hydre de Lerne, le héros se plaint de Junon qui le poursuit de sa haine avec ses rejetons (*Romul.* 4. 2). Ce vers contamine Ovide et Lucain. Dracontius emprunte en effet à Lucain la clause *fata minantur*⁴² et la place du pronom au datif (*mihi/tibi*) formant les deux brèves du dactyle 1^{er}.⁴³ Puis il ajoute l'épithète *mala* à la même place

⁴⁰ Ovide offre aussi la fin de vers *me mea fata trahebant* en *her.* 12. 35 et *met.* VII. 816.

⁴¹ Le poème épigraphique, originaire d'Italie, est daté de la 1^{re} moitié du II^e s. Cf. *CE* 986. 6 : *mala fata uocarunt* /. Corippe reprend en outre le verbe *trahere* (*Iob.* II. 376-377 : [...] *quae te mala fata superbum / ad fera bella trahunt* ?), qui signale l'emprunt car le trisyllabe de fin de vers n'est pas un verbe. Engage-t-il aussi un dialogue avec Dracontius (*Romul.* 4. 2 *Cur mihi uiperei fetus mala fata minantur* ?), ce que l'interrogative signalerait ?

⁴² Il emploie aussi la clause *fata minantur* en *Romul.* 10. 581. On la lira chez Corippe (*Iob.* IV. 134 et VI. 130).

⁴³ *Lucan.* x. 101 : Cléopâtre avertit César que Plothin le menace désormais.

qu'Ovide. Or cette double imitation est similaire car elle repose totalement sur le souvenir auditif du schéma métrique puisque, à part l'idée de 'funestes destins', il n'y a aucun lien entre Dracontius et ces deux intertextes, d'autant que la construction grammaticale est différente : chez Dracontius, *fata* est accusatif du verbe *minantur* alors que chez Ovide il est le sujet de *trahebant* et que chez Lucain *fata minatur* n'ont pas de rapport ! Dans ce premier cas, Dracontius procède donc à un véritable travail d'orfèvre sur ce vers dont Ovide constitue une petite pierre précieuse sertie sur une autre : il s'agit du début du poème et Dracontius veut certainement impressionner son auditoire par cette contamination.

Dans l'autre occurrence tirée du *Rapt d'Hélène*, le raffinement est d'un autre ordre. Cassandre prédit un funeste destin aux Troyens (*uos*) pour avoir accueilli Pâris (*Romul.* 8. 156 *in uos mala fata feruntur*). La syntaxe et le contexte sont plus proches de la *her.* 6 d'Ovide puisque *fata* est le sujet, que *feruntur* rappelle *trahebant* et que l'accueil d'un étranger (Jason/Pâris) cause le malheur. La réminiscence ovidienne donne donc plus d'éclat au vers et met en lumière la vaine prophétie et le peuple condamné. On voit aussi dans cette double reprise de *mala fata* le goût pour la contamination. Un deuxième exemple montre la complexité du jeu de variation avec Ovide.

Dracontius goûte la clausule *bella minatur* qu'il emploie trois fois – il est le seul à l'emprunter à Ovide. Mais en même temps, il imite aussi deux fois Ovide qui a lui-même enrichi cette clausule avec une épithète soulignant la barbarie (*fera*) des ennemis qui le cernent de toutes parts :

Ov. *met.* XIII. 662

Miles adest et, ni dedantur, *bella minatur*.

Ov. *trist.* v. 10. 15

Innumerae circa gentes *fera bella minantur*.

Drac. *Romul.* 8. 469

Martius accipiter dotem *fera bella minatur*.

Drac. *Romul.* 8. 644

fescennina silent et bucina *bella minatur*

Drac. *mens.* 5

Martia iura mouet, signis *fera bella minatur*

Jean Bouquet estime que pour *Romul.* 8. 469, on ne peut savoir si Dracontius s'inspire des *Métamorphoses* ou des *Tristes*.⁴⁴ En outre, nous ignorons dans quel ordre Dracontius écrivit son *Rapt* et l'épigramme *De mensibus*. Cependant je voudrais proposer deux hypothèses à mon sens complémentaires. Dracontius reprend deux fois l'hémistiche *fera bella minatur* après la coupe hepthémimère de deux vers qui s'ouvrent sur Mars (*Martius/Martia*), dans le *Rapt* puis dans son épigramme calendaire (pour présenter le mois de mars). L'hémistiche attire l'attention du lecteur soit parce qu'il note l'allitération interne (r) et l'assonance (a) et apprécie l'alliance, soit parce qu'il reconnaît la réminiscence ovidienne. Dracontius s'en sert en tous les cas pour donner plus de valeur à son vers. En outre, cette auto-imitation souligne l'unité de pensée et d'expression dans l'œuvre de Dracontius.

Mais si l'on considère le seul poème du *Rapt*, Dracontius y crée un effet d'écho qui fait sens à travers Ovide. En effet, les deux passages sont des présages de malheur jouant sur l'opposition entre guerre et mariage afin de dénoncer Pâris. Tout d'abord l'épervier, oiseau de Mars (*Martius accipiter*) annonce explicitement des guerres cruelles (*fera bella*) comme dot à Hélène (*Romul.* 8. 469) au moment de la fatale rencontre.⁴⁵ Dans un deuxième temps, l'antithèse repose sur la trompette guerrière qui résonne au lieu des fescennins lors du mariage de Pâris et Hélène arrivés à Troie (*Romul.* 8. 644). Si l'on considère que les *Tristes* constituent l'unique intertexte des deux vers, Dracontius s'éloigne du texte source dans la deuxième occurrence (v. 644) en supprimant l'épithète. Cependant il est fort possible qu'il joue aussi avec le vers des *Métamorphoses* en raison de plusieurs éléments concordants. Tout d'abord la mention de la guerre de Troie est commune, passée (*met.* XIII) ou à venir (*Rapt*). Ovide insère en effet la clausule dans le récit d'Anius à Énée (*met.* XIII. 644-673), qui souligne le destin commun

⁴⁴ Bouquet 1982, p. 161 note 281.

⁴⁵ On a le même effet d'écho entre la fête en l'honneur de Minerve, inspirée d'Ovide (voir *supra*) et celle en l'honneur de Vénus ici ; de plus pour le présage des oiseaux, en partie influencé par Silius Italicus (cf. Simons 2005, pp. 268-269), le milan vient aussi d'Ovide comme je l'ai signalé note 33. Pour une lecture politique de cet épisode, cf. De Gaetano 2010.

de ses filles et des Troyens, tous victimes des Grecs. Il lui raconte comment elles furent persécutées par les guerriers d'Agamemnon car elles transformaient en blé et huile tout ce qu'elles touchaient. L'alliance *bella minatur* illustre la menace pesant sur leur frère, qui va finalement livrer ses sœurs pour se protéger : pour échapper aux Grecs, elles se transforment alors en colombes. Chez Ovide, la clausule sert donc à dénoncer les Grecs et chez Dracontius à dénoncer Pâris coupable de déclencher la guerre de Troie : en rappelant la faute du héros troyen, Dracontius dialogue aussi avec la lecture que fait Ovide, plus hostile aux Grecs qu'aux Troyens.⁴⁶ Enfin la mention de l'épervier, oiseau de guerre qui pourchasse les colombes (*Romul.* 8. 469), s'oppose aux colombes que sont les filles d'Anius (*met.* XIII. 662), et pourrait constituer un 'clin d'œil' érudit. Je dirais donc que Dracontius contamine les deux réminiscences et joue avec le lecteur : il attire l'attention sur Ovide par l'hémistiche complet (*fera bella minatur*) mais renvoie en fait au passage 'troyen' où Ovide créa la clausule *bella minatur*. Ce faisant, au cœur du poème du *Rapt* et de la future chute de Troie, il insère *via* Ovide la survie de Troie à travers Énée : or elle est aussi proclamée dans une prophétie ambiguë d'Apollon à travers une mosaïque virgilienne.⁴⁷

B. Imiter un même vers de manière différente

Par ailleurs, Dracontius peut à partir d'un même vers jouer avec des mots différents. Ainsi, dans le *De mensibus*, un même distique d'Ovide nourrit deux vers différents afin d'évoquer la fin de l'hiver et la venue du printemps.⁴⁸ Mais ce remploi peut aussi figurer dans des pièces différentes. Par exemple le vers 95 de la *her.* 9 inspire deux poèmes très différents :

⁴⁶ Cf. Fabre-Serris 1995, p. 113 : la douleur du deuil de la guerre de Troie est seulement troyenne chez Ovide qui est dans la perspective de la préparation des destins de Rome, narrée dans une *Énéide* ovidienne où la *pietas* du héros est plus ambiguë que chez Virgile, cf. Fabre-Serris 1995, pp. 116-141.

⁴⁷ Stoehr-Monjou 2016a. Sur cette prophétie d'Apollon, voir aussi De Gaetano 2010.

⁴⁸ Ov. *ars* III. 185-186 *quot noua terra parit flores, cum uere tepenti / uitis agit gemmas pigraque fugit hiemps* inspire Drac. *mens.* 3-4 *Sol hiemis glacies soluit iam uere renidens, / cortice turgidulo rumpunt in palmitibus gemmae et mens.* 21 *Pigra redux torpescit hiems.* Cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2013b, pp. 131-132.

her. 9. 95

quaque redundabat *fecundo uulnere serpens*

Romul. 4. 49

Caesa uigent, alter surgit de *uulnere serpens*

Romul. 7. 54

ut discat sacras *fecundo uulnere* flammis

Il s'agit de la lettre de Déjanire à Hercule désormais dominé par Omphale (*her.* 9). Elle veut rappeler à son époux son ancienne gloire et mentionne ses travaux, en particulier le combat contre l'hydre de Lerne (*serpens*) renaissant sans cesse grâce à une blessure qualifiée de fécondante (*fecundo uulnere*). Dracontius emprunte dans une pièce de jeunesse, l'éthopée d'Hercule (*Romul.* 4 : *Verba Herculis cul uideret hydrae serpentis capita pullare post caedes*), la clausule *uulnere serpens* et l'idée de renaissance qu'il exprime à travers un autre oxymoron (*caesa uigent*) que celui créé par Ovide.⁴⁹ Puis Dracontius emploie *fecundo uulnere*⁵⁰ dans un contexte radicalement différent : il s'agit de l'épithalame où Virginité disparaît après avoir résisté au mari, afin de permettre à la fiancée de connaître l'union charnelle (*Romul.* 7. 54) 'par la blessure fécondante' ou 'par la blessure sacrée'.⁵¹ Que l'on retienne ou non l'hypallage, la défloration est en tout cas qualifiée de manière positive, en particulier parce qu'elle est promesse d'enfantement. J'y vois un jeu de Dracontius avec Ovide et le lecteur : il n'emploie pas là où on l'attendrait l'oxymoron et lui donne un tout autre sens. Cet étonnant décalage me semble avoir une signification profonde : l'oxymoron exprime une contradic-

⁴⁹ Ovide goûte particulièrement cet oxymoron car en *met.* IX. 70 (*Vulneribus fecunda suis erat*), il en emploie un très similaire, en début de vers, toujours à propos de l'Hydre. Dracontius connaît vraisemblablement ce passage, voir *infra*.

⁵⁰ D'après le site *Musisque deosque*, il est le seul à reprendre cette alliance.

⁵¹ Stoehr-Monjou 2014a, pp. 169-170. Dans l'épigramme *De origine rosarum* (v. 5 *tenero uulnere*) on lit un oxymoron similaire pour évoquer, discrètement, la défloration (Stoehr-Monjou 2014a, pp. 168-169). Luceri 2007 ne garde pas l'hypallage et souligne que *fecundus* renvoie chez Dracontius aux pouvoirs de Vénus et Cupidon ; Galli Milić 2008, p. 352 note que le souvenir d'Ovide *her.* 9. 95 est un peu audacieux ; elle rapproche l'image de la défloration de *Romul.* 7. 54 (elle ne retient pas l'hypallage) de celle en *Romul.* 6. 54 *sub uulnere casto* ; ils ne citent pas les autres textes auxquels je renvoie.

tion qui n'est pas mortifère, alors que chez Ovide il y a une fascination pour le monstre invincible.

Ces différents exemples nous montrent la complexité du phénomène d'auto-imitation. Peut-on déduire une éventuelle chronologie des pièces à partir de cette pratique d'écriture ?

C. Auto-imitation et chronologie

Dans le cas analysé plus haut, Dracontius s'éloigne peu à peu du texte source : il emprunte d'abord la clause, dans un contexte similaire, puis un oxymoron en même métrique mais dans un tout autre contexte. Il est très probable qu'il ait retenu ce vers grâce à cette figure qu'il goûte. Un autre exemple montre que Dracontius peut procéder par éloignements successifs et que le contexte ne prime pas forcément. Ovide a créé la clause *colla draconis/-um* pour exprimer une relation privilégiée avec un serpent : Harmonie caresse le cou de Cadmus après sa métamorphose en serpent (*met.* IV. 599) et Médée caresse le cou des serpents de son char quand elle s'envole pour chercher des herbes afin de rajeunir le père de Jason (*met.* VII. 220-221). Après lui, Claudien s'en inspire pour décrire un étendard *draco* (*picta colla*) mais il inverse les substantifs et procède à un enjambement (*Hon.* III *cons.* 138-139). Enfin Dracontius imite Ovide trois fois et rivalise avec Claudien et Ovide une fois :

Ov. *met.* IV. 599

lubrica permulcet cristati *colla draconis*

Ov. *met.* VII. 220-221

quo simul ascendit frenataque *colla draconum* / permulsit

Claud. *Hon.* III *cons.* 138-139

hi *picta draconum* / colla leuant

Romul. 4. 48

Vt crescent gaudentque mori fera *colla draconum* !

Romul. 10. 24

squamea uiperei subdentes *colla dracones*

Romul. 10. 442

et sinuant orbes per pallida *colla dracones*

Romul. 10. 556-557

Venere *dracones* / uiperea ceruice iubas et colla leuantes

La première occurrence constitue une imitation stricte de la clausule, contient une épithète morale (*fera*) et désigne un autre serpent, l'hydre de Lerne (*Romul.* 4. 48) ; la deuxième en *Romul.* 10. 24 comprend une légère modification à la clausule puisque le génitif devient nominatif mais le contexte est bien celui de *met.* VII. 220 : il s'agit des serpents du char de Médée attelés (*subdentes* remplace *frenata*) ; enfin la troisième occurrence dans la même pièce, en *Romul.* 10. 442, conserve la clausule modifiée *colla dracones*, change le contexte (les Furies) et ajoute une épithète physique qui connote la dimension infernale (*pal-lida*), en ce sens plus riche que *fera* dans l'éthopée. Dracontius procède par éloignements successifs, à la fois du point de vue formel et contextuel. Enfin la dernière occurrence du même poème (*Romul.* 10. 556-557) révèle une two-tier allusion : il me semble en effet que Dracontius s'est amusé à rivaliser avec Claudien à travers Ovide en revenant à l'évocation des serpents du char de Médée. Établir une chronologie ferme est donc délicat pour deux raisons : la manière dont il procède à l'auto-imitation peut varier et il faudrait faire une étude systématique de ce procédé dans toute l'œuvre de Dracontius afin d'avoir assez de données statistiques pour dégager des tendances fiables.⁵² Ces quatre derniers exemples montrent aussi qu'Ovide, par des jeux d'écho, peut contribuer à créer une unité dans le macrocosme du poème.

D. Souligner l'unité entre des pièces et à l'intérieur de l'œuvre

La même fin d'un pentamètre ovidien (*trist.* II. 172) inspire Dracontius au début de chacun de ses épithalames :

Ov. *trist.* II. 172

ponat et in nitida *laurea sarta coma*

Drac. *Romul.* 7. 8-9

Laurea sarta comis religans et tempora myrto
prodere gestirem

Romul. 6. 12

laurea sarta comis imponat pulchra Dione

⁵² Cf. Stoeck-Monjou 2014b, pp. 90-92 contre Bright 1999, pp. 200-201 qui situe *Le Rapt* après la *Satisfactio* avec des arguments contestables.

La formule *laurea sertā coma* désigne Tibère victorieux. Ovide fait en effet allusion à l'espoir de victoires futures pour Tibère avant de formuler des vœux en faveur d'Auguste dont il espère être rappelé de Tomes. Dans l'épithalame écrit en prison, Dracontius affirme que, s'il pouvait participer au mariage et chanter ces noces, sa chevelure serait couronnée de laurier et de myrte, signes de son inspiration pour une poésie d'amour par le laurier d'Apollon et le myrte de Vénus (*Romul.* 7. 8-9). Mais le subjonctif d'irréel du présent *gestirem* souligne bien cette impossibilité. Au contraire dans l'épithalame écrit à sa sortie de prison, il décrit un cortège de dieux qui se réjouissent du mariage des deux frères. Vénus se pare alors du laurier d'Apollon (*Romul.* 6. 12). Cette reprise souligne donc l'aspect festif que le poète ne peut assumer dans un premier temps mais qu'il accepte ensuite. Elle montre à nouveau la différence entre les deux textes : seul le second remplit réellement sa fonction épithalame.⁵³

Enfin, l'auto-imitation à travers Ovide dépasse aussi les frontières entre poésie profane et religieuse. Par exemple, Dracontius utilise la même comparaison d'un roi avec un lion magnanime dans son *Rapt* (*Romul.* 8. 350-362) et dans la *Satisfactio* (v. 137-142) à partir d'Ovide (*trist.* III. 5. 33-34). Dans un cas la comparaison permet d'affirmer le succès du discours apaisant (*Rapt*), dans l'autre elle veut persuader le roi de changer d'attitude et de pardonner au poète : ce qui est réalisé dans le *Rapt* ne l'est pas encore dans la *Satisfactio* et ces deux comparaisons soulignent la différence entre fiction et réalité.⁵⁴

E. Le *uersus aureus*

Je voudrais finir par l'analyse d'une influence ovidienne exceptionnelle par son raffinement : la reprise d'un vers d'or en auto-imita-

⁵³ Stoechr-Monjou 2015c.

⁵⁴ Stoechr-Monjou 2014b, pp. 86-89 sur la comparaison du *Rapt* et pp. 90-92 pour le rapprochement avec la *Satisfactio*. Le lien avec le *Rapt* et Ovide est absent de Goldlust 2015 p. 250 qui met l'accent sur l'idée que Dracontius entend 'programmer' l'attitude du roi.

tion qui donne à voir la création d'une œuvre cohérente et riche de sens à travers la relecture d'Ovide.

Dans toute son œuvre, Dracontius imite avant tout des vers d'or de Claudien et d'Ovide : cela montre bien l'importance de ces deux poètes. Dracontius emprunte des vers d'or à Claudien pour exprimer l'amour et l'union.⁵⁵ Qu'en est-il pour Ovide ? Dracontius a annoncé dans le *prooemium* de l'*Orestis* le meurtre de Clytemnestre précisément à travers un vers d'or : *laurea regali rutilantia sertā cruore* (*Orest.* 5). Et de fait, il concentre lors de cette mort deux vers d'or grâce à Ovide : il façonne le premier (*Orest.* 789 *maestā uerecundo uoluebat lumina uisū*) à partir d'une réminiscence ovidienne (*met.* XIV. 840 *illa uerecundo uix tollens lumina uultu*)⁵⁶ puis il rivalise directement avec un vers d'or de son modèle (*met.* II. 607 / *Orest.* 792). Dès à présent, on peut affirmer qu'une telle concentration du vers le plus raffiné qui soit pour le personnage le plus honni du poème rejoint la prédilection de la métrique ovidienne dans l'*Orestis* et invite à voir Ovide comme un modèle essentiel à l'écriture de Dracontius. Mais on peut aller plus loin.

En effet, je considère que ce *uersus aureus* d'Ovide consacré à Coronis mourante, à la fois coupable d'infidélité et victime de la vengeance de Phébus, est l'intertexte de quatre vers d'or,⁵⁷ ce qui crée un réseau signifiant à l'intérieur des deux poèmes quand il oppose l'ombre d'Agamemnon (*Orest.* 524) et la mort de Clytemnestre (*Orest.* 792), les chars de Vénus (*Romul.* 10. 158) et de Médée (*Romul.* 10. 24) :

⁵⁵ Stoechr-Monjou 2007, vol. I, pp. 603-607 et vol. II, pp. 852-854 remanié dans Stoechr-Monjou à paraître c.

⁵⁶ Pour un commentaire, voir Stoechr-Monjou à paraître c.

⁵⁷ Vollmer 1905, p. 184 rapproche *Romul.* 10. 158 de *Orest.* 792 et pour *Orest.* 792 (p. 221) renvoie à *met.* II. 607 et signale *Orest.* 724 : l'auto-imitation est relevée, mais pas à travers Ovide. Bouquet 1995, p. 222 note 571 note que *Ov. met.* II. 607 est la source de *Orest.* 524 et 792. Pour *Romul.* 10. 158, il l'inclut avec d'autres vers reprenant ce contraste de couleur (*laud.* II. 532 *candida sanguineum* ; *Romul.* 8. 519 *candida roseo*) mais il ne relève pas la spécificité du vers d'or. Kaufmann, 2006, p. 219 note 613 à *Romul.* 10. 158 rapproche *met.* II. 607 et *Orest.* 792 pour la même attaque de vers et le vers d'or ; elle ne relève pas l'opposition avec *Romul.* 10. 24. Grillone 2008, pp. 202, 204 rapproche *Orest.* 792 de *met.* II. 607 mais pas *Orest.* 524.

Ov. *met.* II. 607

candida puniceo perfudit membra cruore

Orest. 524

pallida puniceo perfuderat ora cruore 3 mots communs avec Ovide

Orest. 792

Candida puniceo rutilantur membra cruore 4 mots communs

Romul. 10. 24

squamea uiperei subdentes colla dracones aucun mot commun

Romul. 10. 158

candida puniceis subduntur colla rosetis 2 mots communs

La construction est passionnante. Dans chaque poème, le second vers reprend avec la première partie du vers d'or ovidien le jeu de contraste dans les couleurs (*candida punice[o]*), et il comporte plus de mots communs avec Ovide que le premier vers. Dracontius se rapproche dans les deux poèmes du texte source puisque dans l'*Orestis* il y a trois puis quatre mots communs, dans *Médée* aucun puis deux, ce qui signifie dans ce dernier cas que l'influence, indirecte, n'est repérable qu'à travers le second vers *Romul.* 10. 158 comme je vais essayer de le montrer. Voyons comment il procède dans ces quatre vers.

Il y a un contexte similaire entre Ovide et *Orest.* 792 : deux femmes sont victimes d'une vengeance, tuées pour une trahison amoureuse (Coronis / Clytemnestre est de plus meurtrière). Le poète reprend en outre strictement les substantifs (*membra cruore*) après le verbe en clé de voûte et les épithètes qui forment un contraste saisissant (*candida puniceo*). Seul le verbe diffère : *rutilantur* (*Orest.* 792) renforce encore le contraste des couleurs entre le sang et le teint éclatant de la reine, enfin digne dans la mort. Le poète confère ainsi à Clytemnestre une réelle beauté dans le trépas. Or cette mort offre une subtile variation à la description de l'ombre d'Agamemnon (v. 524) qui connote au contraire la mort et les Enfers : l'alliance initiale offre un contraste non pas de couleur mais d'éclat avec le choix de *pallida* par rapport au *candida* ovidien. Dracontius signale aussi l'*aemulatio* avec Ovide par la reprise du même adjectif *puniceo* avant le verbe, du même verbe en clé de voûte (*perfudit* / *perfuderat*) et du même nom en fin de vers (*cruore*). Dans l'*Orestis*, le lecteur

peut reconnaître assez aisément le double jeu avec Ovide et entre les deux vers,⁵⁸ ce qui est moins évident dans *Médée*. Dracontius y reprend l'attaque de vers ovidienne avec *candida punice(o)* dans un troisième vers d'or pour décrire les colombes tirant le char de Vénus avec le cou sous des gerbes de rose (*rosetis*). Dracontius supprime le contexte morbide et met l'accent sur une beauté simple : c'est l'esthétique du vers d'or qui met en valeur le char de Vénus et non des matériaux précieux comme chez Sidoine Apollinaire⁵⁹ – ce qui confirme qu'Ovide constitue un élément du style joyau de Dracontius. Le vers 158 s'oppose à un quatrième vers d'or, situé dans le *prooemium* et qui évoque le char de Médée : nulle beauté n'est conférée à ce dernier comme l'indiquent les deux épithètes initiales *squamea uiperei*. Ainsi Dracontius remplace dans le vers 24 le contraste chromatique par l'accumulation monstrueuse (*squamea uiperei*) : à travers le vers d'Ovide sur Coronis relu au vers 158, *Romul.* 10. 24 confirme d'une part la présentation négative et infernale de Médée dès le *prooemium*⁶⁰ et annonce d'autre part la dimension mortifère et infernale de ces serpents, dimension qui sera confirmée dans l'*ekphrasis* du char à la fin du poème.⁶¹ Et ce n'est pas un hasard que la clausule *colla dracones* de *Romul.* 10. 24 soit justement inspirée d'Ovide (*met.* VII. 220)⁶² car Dracontius garde ainsi une unité *poétique*, directe et indirecte. On décèle donc dans ces deux poèmes épiques une recherche d'effets d'écho et de contraste dans une même pièce, et entre les deux poèmes, puisqu'à chaque fois une occurrence est positive, et l'autre l'est moins (voire pas du tout).

Ainsi, Dracontius joue avec son lecteur qui peut reconstituer les variations antithétiques et effets d'écho.⁶³ Ovide a un rôle

⁵⁸ Bouquet 1995, p. 222 note 571 relève justement l'intertexte ovidien pour *Orest.* 524 et 792 quand il commente le v. 792 et non pas le v. 524.

⁵⁹ Il s'agit d'une *ekphrasis* (Sidon. *carm.* 11. 94-107) dans un épithalame dans laquelle Sidoine rivalise avec Ovide, voir l'édition de Filosini 2014, *ad loc* et l'article Filosini 2014, pp. 361-362.

⁶⁰ Pour un commentaire détaillé de *Romul.* 10. 24 et 158, voir Stoechr-Monjou 2013a, pp. 166-168. Pour Médée dans le *prooemium*, voir Stoechr-Monjou à paraître c et pour Médée dans le poème Stoechr-Monjou 2016c.

⁶¹ Cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2013a.

⁶² Voir *supra* II. C.

⁶³ La réminiscence ovidienne est plus facile à repérer dès le premier vers de l'*Orestis* que dans celui de *Médée*, mais cela ne signifie pas que l'écriture de l'*Orestis* est antérieure à celle de *Romul.* 10. Tous ces éléments expliquent ma pru-

essentiel dans 'l'écriture du contraste' et 'l'écriture de détail' qui caractérisent la poétique de Dracontius.⁶⁴ Enfin, il nourrit en profondeur son vers avec les vers d'Ovide, qui contribue à donner une cohérence aux poèmes jusque dans leur esthétique. Je vais donc à présent examiner comment le dialogue avec Ovide, même critique, permet à Dracontius de créer une œuvre unifiée et cohérente dans le macrocosme des poèmes, voire de l'ensemble de son œuvre.

DEUXIÈME PARTIE : DANS LE MACROCOSME DES POÈMES PROFANES, UN DIALOGUE CONSTANT AVEC OVIDE

Si l'on examine l'influence d'Ovide dans le macrocosme des épisodes puis des poèmes, il apparaît clairement que Dracontius dialogue avec le poète et s'en écarte parfois volontairement. Ovide n'est jamais là où on l'attend.

I. Donner un color : l'exemple des deux épithalames

J'ai déjà évoqué le renforcement ponctuel de la tonalité d'un poème. Mais Dracontius, qui aime l'accumulation, peut aussi concentrer un réseau de réminiscences qui vont donner de la cohérence à un épisode, voire au poème. Je l'ai déjà étudié à propos du char de Médée construit pour rivaliser avec celui de Phaéton⁶⁵ et je voudrais le montrer à travers la comparaison entre deux poèmes de même genre, les épithalames qui constituent un ensemble antithétique où précisément la présence d'Ovide est très différente, comme on l'a vu plus haut pour une réminiscence ponctuelle. Considérons d'abord la nature des réminiscences ovidiennes à un niveau global, ce qui est possible vu la dimension des deux textes (*Romul.* 6 : 122 vers et *Romul.* 7 : 159 vers).⁶⁶ Dans l'épithalame écrit en prison (*Romul.* 7), je relève

dence dans l'analyse de l'auto-imitation : ici, il ne s'éloigne pas progressivement du texte source mais s'en rapproche, cf. ma conclusion de II. C *supra* p. 377.

⁶⁴ Je l'ai montré dans plusieurs articles, par ex. Stoehr-Monjou 2013a-b, 2014a-b, Stoehr-Monjou à paraître c.

⁶⁵ Stoehr-Monjou 2013a, pp. 168-169.

⁶⁶ Les relevés qui suivent sont tirés des annexes de ma thèse, cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2007, t. II, pp. 858-892.

huit réminiscences ovidiennes : l'une désigne le poète s'il était inspiré, trois emplois mentionnent des figures mythiques avec une connotation érotique empreinte d'humour (Pan, Silène et Galatée) et quatre figurent dans un passage métapoétique où le poète exprime son impuissance poétique.⁶⁷ Or l'Ovide exilé est absent de ce dernier passage, dans une étonnante mise à distance *poétique* de cette souffrance qu'il évoque pourtant longuement dans une triple comparaison épique du poète emprisonné avec un soldat, un cheval et un oiseau (*Romul.* VII. 69-136). Il y a là un écart avec la *Satisfactio*⁶⁸ peut-être en raison du mètre élégiaque, par souci de variation mais surtout par le refus de se laisser enfermer dans cet éthos de suppliant : car s'il prie Dieu et le roi de le libérer dans la *Satisfactio*, il se plaint de la famille qui l'abandonne et leur offre un 'non-épithalame'.⁶⁹ La comparaison homérique démultipliée est aussi une manière de s'échapper, par la poésie, de sa situation et surtout d'exprimer l'impuissance poétique dans un des plus beaux textes de Dracontius.⁷⁰ Dans l'épithalame écrit à sa sortie de prison, la présence ovidienne (onze emplois) est très différente : cinq emplois servent à louer les mariés ou leurs familles et les six autres à évoquer l'amour charnel mais cette fois de manière moins allusive.⁷¹ Or ces différences sont très révélatrices du contenu de chaque poème : il exhale

⁶⁷ Ce sont respectivement pour le mythe : *Romul.* 7. 29 : *Ov. met.* I. 707 ; *Romul.* 7. 38 : *ars* I. 541-542 ; *Romul.* 7. 151 : *met.* XI. 237-238 ; pour la triple comparaison épique : *Romul.* 7. 75-76 : *met.* III. 704-705 ; *Romul.* 7. 80 : *met.* III. 704-705 et VII. 542 ; *Romul.* 7. 94 : *am.* I. 2. 15 ; *Romul.* 7. 97 : *ars* III. 311. Pour une autre évocation du poète, *Romul.* 7. 8 (= 6. 12) : *trist.* II. 172, cf. *supra* II. D.

⁶⁸ Dracontius en nourrit les aveux de la *Satisfactio*, en particulier à propos de la nature de sa faute, cf. *Ov. trist.* III. 5. 49-52 et *satisf.* 93-94. Pour *satisf.* 117 inspiré de *Ov. trist.* I. 1. 84, cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2011, p. 207 et n. 19 ; voir l'article de S. Filosini dans le présent volume sur *Tristia* II comme clé d'interprétation (pp. 349-352) ; pour la comparaison avec le lion (*satisf.* 137-147) inspirée de *trist.* III. 5. 33-34, cf. Ead. pp. 344-345. Dracontius la retravaille aussi dans *Le Rapt* également dans un contexte politique, voir p. 378 et note 54.

⁶⁹ Cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2015c, pp. 266-268.

⁷⁰ Cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2007, pp. 429-436 et Ead. à paraître c.

⁷¹ Pour les familles : *Romul.* 6. 2 : *Ov. trist.* III. 6. 1 ; *Romul.* 6. 12 : *trist.* II. 172 ; *Romul.* 6. 35 : *her.* 4. 63-65, cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2015c, pp. 269-270 ; *Romul.* 6. 84 : *Pont.* III. 2. 17 ; *Romul.* 6. 85 : *am.* I. 15. 1 et *rem.* 389 ; pour l'amour : *Romul.* 6. 18 : *am.* I. 9. 1-2 ; *Romul.* 6. 20-21 : cf. *am.* I. 2. 28-29 ; *Romul.* 6. 60 : *met.* IV. 184 ; *Romul.* 6. 93 : cf. *ars* I. 311 ; *Romul.* 6. 95 : *met.* XI. 419 ; *Romul.* 6. 109-110 : *Ov. am.* I. 2. 17-18.

son ressentiment dans le premier poème, et, alors qu'il s'agit d'un poème de mariage, la *persona* de Dracontius est très présente à travers Ovide. Puis il accomplit réellement son devoir de poète officiel dans le deuxième épithalame : Ovide lui sert alors à louer les familles et les deux couples, à célébrer l'amour selon le *topos* du genre, ce qu'il avait refusé dans le poème précédent – et il ne parle plus de lui-même à travers des réminiscences ovidiennes. Si l'on examine plus en détail l'évocation de l'amour charnel dans les deux poèmes, l'influence divergente du *color* ovidien se confirme.

Quand il évoque le chœur imaginaire des jeunes filles qui jouent de la musique aux noces de Johanes et Vitula, Dracontius mentionne les tambourins de Bacchus, la flûte de Pan et la lyre d'Apollon (*Romul.* 7. 28-32) puis il introduit aussitôt après un cortège de Bacchus (*Romul.* 7. 33-38) qu'il conclut par Silène ivre sur son âne. Il emprunte au poète de Sulmone au début du passage (v. 29) la fin de vers ovidienne *harundine uentos* et à la fin du passage en un même schéma métrique / *ebrius... Sileno asello* / (v. 38) : J. Bouquet a interprété cela comme un mécanisme de duplication, Ovide appelant Ovide et voit dans Silène un rapprochement par 'identité de situation'.⁷² J'ajouterai quatre éléments :

1. Ces deux réminiscences ouvrent et ferment un même passage et Ovide lui permet de donner un *color* et une unité à ce petit tableau :⁷³

Ov. *met.* I. 707-8

dumque ibi suspirat, motos in *harundine uentos*
effecisse sonum tenuem similemque querenti.

Drac. *Romul.* 7. 29-30

percutiant palmis, digitis sub *harundine uentos*
dispensent hinc inde melos perflante labello

Ov. *ars* I. 541-542

ebrius ecce senex pando *Silenus asello* / uix sedet)

Drac. *Romul.* 7. 38

ebrius interea nudet *Silenus asello*

⁷² Cf. Bouquet 1982, p. 182.

⁷³ Galli Milić 2008, p. 323 et 328 distingue les chœurs et les chants, tout en remarquant qu'il n'y a pas de rupture. Je pense qu'Ovide contribue à cette unité.

2. Ces deux réminiscences ont un lien avec Pan. En effet, chez Ovide, *harundine uentos* figure dans le passage où Syrinx, poursuivie par Pan, se métamorphose en roseau pour lui échapper : quand le dieu soupire, il constate qu'un son léger s'élève du roseau (*met.* I. 707-708). Quant à Silène, il est aussi associé à Pan chez Ovide ;⁷⁴ Dracontius concentre l'évocation de Silène ivre en un vers et montre son goût pour la précision dans le vocabulaire en remplaçant *uix sedet* par *nutet*.

3. Dracontius crée un effet d'écho discret au niveau de la macrostructure à travers la mention ovidienne de Silène, ce qui révèle une construction assez raffinée : au début de l'épithalame, il évoque de manière allusive le dieu s'éprenant d'Ariane à son retour d'Inde : [*spicula*] *Liber quibus arserat Indus, / candida Dictaeae cum cerneret ora puellae* (*Romul.* 7. 19-20). Ce faisant, notre poète joue visiblement du contexte dans lequel Ovide cite le vieillard ivre : Ariane s'évanouit à la vue de Silène et des Satyres, Bacchus en profitant pour l'enlever.

4. Enfin Dracontius crée un petit tableau sonore qui a un *color* champêtre, ce qui fait écho à l'étiologie de la flûte en *met.* I. 708-709. Or, ce faisant, Dracontius polémique avec Claudien qui, justement, rivalisait avec Ovide *met.* I. 707-708. Dans *l'Épithalame en l'honneur de Palladius*, Claudien compose un vers d'or où il concentre la fin de vers *harundine uentum* (v. 707) et l'alliance *tenuem similemque* (v. 708) : alors qu'Hyménée varie les sons sur le frêle roseau (Claud. *carm. min.* 25. 38 : *dis similem tenui uariabat* *harundine uentum*), Vénus lui reproche sa mélodie bucolique (*carm. min.* 25. 44-49). En construisant l'épisode autour de Pan et Silène, Dracontius répond à Claudien que, dans ce mariage et son poème, les divinités champêtres sont bien présentes⁷⁵ – précisément peut-être parce qu'il établit une distance avec le couple et ne loue pas réellement ce mariage.

Un autre exemple de mise à distance teintée d'humour est l'évocation de Galatée. Elle figure dans le cortège marin à la fin du même épithalame, assise sur un dauphin et aspergeant d'eau

⁷⁴ Même fin de vers en *fast.* I. 399, où Ovide évoque une fête champêtre (vv. 396-397) réunissant les Pans, les jeunes satyres, *senior pando Silenus asello*, Priape, Liber et les Naiades.

⁷⁵ Cf. Wilson 1948, pp. 35-40.

Neptune. Là encore Ovide n'est pas là où on l'attend puisque Dracontius ne s'inspire pas du passage des *Métamorphoses* sur Galatée⁷⁶ mais d'une autre Néréide, Thétis :

Ov. *met.* XI. 237 :
*frenato delphine sedens, Theti, nuda solebas.*⁷⁷

Drac. *Romul.* 7. 151-152
inter quas delphine sedens Galatea minaci
Neptunum perfundet aquis [...].

Dracontius souligne son emprunt en le mettant entre les coupes trihéminère et hephthémimère et en employant *minaci* à la place de *frenato*. Alors qu'Ovide raconte comment Thétis a coutume de se rendre sur un dauphin dans une grotte pour faire la sieste où elle est surprise par Pélée, Galatée se moque de Neptune : on ne peut exclure une allusion érotique.⁷⁸ Ainsi Dracontius met à distance dans cet épithalame le mythe par l'humour moqueur à propos de Pan, Silène et Galatée.

Il fait au contraire l'éloge de l'amour dans le second épithalame, en retravaillant le vers ovidien d'une manière similaire, par la mise à distance. L'effet d'antithèse entre les deux poèmes est souligné par le contexte similaire de cortège divin. Dracontius énumère le cortège des allégories qui accompagnent Cupidon au mariage des deux couples et qui symbolisent les vertus qu'ils sont appelés à avoir. Dracontius opère une *retractatio* d'Ovide assez étonnante :⁷⁹

Ov. *met.* IV. 184
In mediis ambo deprensi amplexibus haerent

Drac. *Romul.* 6. 60-61
 [...] *Amplexibus haerens / iusta Libido coit*

⁷⁶ On pense d'abord, par le ton léger, à une *retractatio* de la tragique histoire de Galatée aimée d'Acis que Polyphème tue par jalousie (Ov. *met.* XIII. 750-897).

⁷⁷ Chez Ovide, Thétis a coutume d'aller faire la sieste dans une grotte. Pélée l'y surprend. *Frenato* devient chez Dracontius *minaci*.

⁷⁸ Elle pourrait être renforcée par deux éléments : Luceri 2007, p. 278 trouve ce tableau empreint de joie proche de la délicatesse d'*ekphrasis* hellénistiques. Galli Milić 2008, p. 436 rapproche *Romul.* 7. 151-152 des avances de Galatée à Triton dans un épithalame de Sidoine Apollinaire (*carm.* 11. 37-41, cf. Filosini 2014, *ad loc.*).

⁷⁹ Elle est signalée par Vollmer 1905 *ad loc.* mais n'est commentée ni par Simons 2005, ni par Selent 2011, pp. 78-79, 120-121.

Ovide utilise la fin de vers *amplexibus haerent* à propos de Vénus et Mars surpris par Vulcain : attrapés dans son filet, ils restent immobilisés dans leur étreinte, ce qui fait rire les dieux. Au contraire Dracontius insiste sur la légitimité des étreintes par l'adjectif *iusta*. Il passe ainsi d'un récit scabreux et comique à deux abstractions évoquant l'amour charnel légitime au sein du couple, Les Étreintes et Désir. On pourrait lire dans cette *retracatio* une manière de donner avec humour un 'Ovide moralisé'.⁸⁰ De fait on relève bien d'autres passages où Ovide permet de donner une cohérence à un épisode mais est détourné de son sens d'origine par Dracontius.

II. Jeux de décalage et mise à distance

Pour Dracontius, l'événement biographique et poétique majeur est l'emprisonnement : les deux épithalames y font allusion. Or Dracontius ne s'inspire pas comme on pourrait s'y attendre des poèmes écrits durant la relégation d'Ovide. En revanche, il le fait à d'autres moments de son œuvre et ces jeux de décalage contribuent à l'influence paradoxale d'Ovide. Dans une de ses pièces de jeunesse, la deuxième préface dédiée à Felicianus (*Romul.* 3), Dracontius construit une allégorie complexe : il compare Félicianus éduquant ses élèves au climat qui féconde la terre et il envisage le mauvais temps comme métaphore de l'absence du maître. Par exemple, l'alliance *ager deceptus* (*Romul.* 3. 13) est un souvenir d'Ovide exilé qui évoque son manque d'inspiration par *deceptus* et la même métaphore.⁸¹ Ainsi, la réminiscence du poète augustéen relégué permet de souligner le sens de l'allégorie : les élèves sont la terre que cultive le *magister* et son pouvoir est considérable. Absent, ils se taisent. Je lis là une influence paradoxale d'Ovide puisque l'exil inspire un passage inattendu de Dracontius.

⁸⁰ Luceri 2007, p. 145 et Galli Milić 2008, pp. 190-191 soulignent que l'expression *amplexibus haerere* est fréquente.

⁸¹ Ov. *Pont.* I. 5, 32-34 : *ego / qui, sterili totiens cum sim deceptus ab aruo, / damnosa persto condere semen humo*. Plus loin (I. 5. 56), il avoue ne pas polir ses vers car il doute de pouvoir écrire quoi que ce soit, *hanc messem satis est si mea reddit humus*.

Deux autres exemples dans le *Rapt* révèlent l'humour de Dracontius et un sens de la parodie. Tout d'abord, lorsqu'Apollon persuade les Troyens de garder Pâris en vie contre les prophéties d'Hélénus et Cassandre, il conclut son discours en rappelant qu'il fut lui-même berger d'Alceste et d'Admète. Or aux nombreuses réminiscences bucoliques virgiliennes, on peut ajouter un discours séducteur d'Apollon qui est strictement inversé.⁸² Il poursuit Daphné :

Ov. *met.* I. 513-514

non ego sum pastor, non hic armenta gregesque
horridus obseruo

Drac. *Romul.* 8. 206

ego pastor Apollo / ipse fui

Plus loin, Pâris essuie une tempête terrible, qui va provoquer son naufrage et son arrivée à Chypre où il rencontrera Hélène. Le poète joue alors d'un passage où Ovide se plaint de son terrible voyage en mer lors de son départ en exil quand les cordages du bateau touchent presque les astres :

trist. I. 2. 20

iam iam tacturos sidera summa *putes*.

Romul. 8. 390

sidera tacta putant /

Chez Dracontius, ce vers précède le monologue plaintif du jeune homme, qui constitue en fait son plus long discours dans le poème, et qui révèle parfaitement l'éthos du personnage : il se lamente, regrette sa vie champêtre passée et révèle sa couardise. Ce détournement de l'épopée se redouble d'un mélange des genres puisque le discours est une véritable bucolique faisant l'éloge de la vie pastorale à travers des réminiscences de Virgile. Ainsi, quand Pâris fait l'éloge des plaisirs simples, regrette son rôle de *pastor*, il se souvient avec émotion des chèvres brouquant l'herbe. L'ironie me semble renforcée par un souvenir érudit : la clausule *dentibus herbas* (v. 410) est en effet un emprunt à Ovide décrivant la Faim en train d'arracher les moindres touffes

⁸² Cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2016a, p. 151 pour l'influence virgilienne dans ces vers.

d'herbe⁸³... Dans ces deux passages, Ovide semble aussi utilisé pour saper le discours bucolique virgilien. Enfin, l'éthos d'Ovide exilé, au lieu d'exprimer la souffrance de l'emprisonnement, apparaît en décalage dans l'œuvre profane, voire avec une intention parodique.

Ces quelques exemples révèlent, me semble-t-il, que Dracontius montre plus de révérence à l'égard de la métrique et du vers ovidiens que des thèmes ovidiens. De fait, il en arrive à une véritable *retractatio* d'Ovide si l'on considère la macrostructure de plusieurs poèmes.

III. *Retractatio d'Ovide*

A. Le choix des sujets

Si l'on examine le choix des sujets dans les poèmes mythologiques, la présence ovidienne est là encore paradoxale. Dans *Médée*, Dracontius rivalise avec Ovide pour le choix du genre épique annoncé à travers l'invocation à Calliope et le choix de l'hexamètre (*Romul.* 10. 26-30) et pour le sujet réunissant les deux facettes du mythe (en Colchide dans le royaume de Créon) traitées séparément chez les autres poètes. Il opère cependant une *retractatio* en omettant le rajeunissement d'Éson et le meurtre de Pélidas (*met.* VII. 159-349) – bien qu'il y fasse allusion justement par l'oxymoron *uitas mortisque* (*Romul.* 10. 8) – et la fuite à Athènes (*met.* VII. 399-424).⁸⁴ Au contraire il amplifie la vengeance de Médée, délaissée par Ovide (*met.* VII. 391-399). En outre, Dracontius rivalise avec Ovide mais *semble* éviter, sinon les passages ovidiens consacrés à cette héroïne (*her.* 12 et *met.* VII. 11-424),⁸⁵ du moins ceux se rapportant aux épisodes que lui-même

⁸³ Cf. *Ov. met.* VIII. 807. Elle est reprise deux autres fois, cf. *Homer.* 371 ; *Coripp. Ioh.* VI. 359.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Ov. met.* VII. 1-424 ; vv. 1-158 : en Colchide ; vv. 159-349 : rajeunissement d'Éson et meurtre de Pélidas ; vv. 391-399 : meurtre de la rivale et infanticide ; vv. 399-424 : séjour à Athènes et fuite de Médée sur son char.

⁸⁵ J. Bouquet (1982, p. 183) sur la base des *loci similes* de Vollmer 1905 affirme qu'il n'y a aucun souvenir de ces deux textes ovidiens sur Médée dans la *Medea*. Pour ma part je n'ai pas procédé à une analyse personnelle (cf. note 8 *supra*). Cependant l'analyse de l'auto-imitation m'a permis d'en relever deux comme je le signale, ce qui explique ma prudence.

choisit de traiter. J'ai mentionné plus haut à propos de l'auto-imitation la clause *colla draconum* (Ov. *met.* VII. 220) quand Médée s'envole sur son char pour rajeunir son beau-père. Elle nourrit quatre passages de Dracontius, dont trois dans *Médée* (*Romul.* 10. 24, 442, 556-557), ce qui confirme mon interprétation pour *uitas mortisque* au vers 8 comme une allusion ovidienne. Bref, si la clause est dans un contexte d'abord similaire (v. 24 et 556) puis différent (v. 442 les serpents des Furies), Dracontius s'inspire justement d'un épisode qu'il ne traite pas dans son poème. Ovide n'est donc pas présent comme le lecteur l'attend.⁸⁶

Cette influence paradoxale est confirmée par deux éléments du *prooemium*. L'attaque du poème *fert animus* (*Romul.* 10. 1 *Fert animus uulgare nefas et uirginis atrae*) vient du premier vers du grand poème d'Ovide qui annonce son projet de 'dire les métamorphoses des formes en corps nouveaux' (*met.* I. 1-2 *In noua fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora*). Dracontius se souvient d'Ovide à travers Lucain (I. 67 *fert animus causas tantarum expromere rerum*).⁸⁷ Or il est évident que cela constitue un signal fort pour le lecteur qui attend un poème placé sous l'influence d'Ovide et de sa Médée. Mais il n'en est rien et, mieux, Dracontius s'emploie dans les vers qui suivent (*Romul.* 10. 1-13) à dénoncer Médée magicienne, en jouant de réminiscences de Lucain à propos des sorcières thessaliennes qui sont le vrai modèle intertextuel de son héroïne.⁸⁸ Ainsi la contamination des deux poètes a une signification pour *Médée* : elle annonce d'une part la volonté de *retractatio* avec Ovide qui traite de manière plus positive le personnage de Médée⁸⁹ mais surtout la magie,⁹⁰ et d'autre part le choix du *uates* de dénoncer une sor-

⁸⁶ Bouquet 1982, p. 183 : 'On ne trouve aucun écho du livre 7 des *Métamorphoses* ni de la douzième *Héroïde*, où, pourtant, notre poète *aurait dû* puiser.' (Je souligne en italique).

⁸⁷ Thomas 1958, p. 148 a, entre autres, montré l'influence d'Ovide sur Lucain.

⁸⁸ Stoechr-Monjou 2016c.

⁸⁹ Dracontius la dénonce d'emblée comme *uirginis atrae*, alors qu'Ovide montre d'abord la jeune fille déchirée, entre la raison et la passion, *mens* et *cupido*, cf. Wasyl 2007, p. 82. Sur Médée qui règne sur l'univers par sa magie et sur la magie comme reflet de la création poétique, cf. Vial 2010, pp. 72-73.

⁹⁰ Viarre 1959, p. 327 considère que la magie est 'l'aspect à la fois le plus secret et le plus spectaculaire du poète des *Métamorphoses*'. Elle considère qu'elle n'est 'ni magie de la mort ni magie de l'amour mais magie de la transformation, c'est-à-dire magie existant par elle-même et pour elle-même', contrairement à la

cière, comme le fait Lucain.⁹¹ En outre, Dracontius exprime ainsi sa volonté de révéler un crime indicible (*nefas*), ce qu'il nuance quelques vers plus loin par une autre réminiscence ovidienne. Il affirme en effet que le poète n'a pas le droit de *tout* dire.⁹² Ainsi, il met à distance Ovide pour la figure de Médée mais est influencé par lui pour la question de l'inspiration, ce que je relève aussi dans le *prooemium* du *Rapt d'Hélène*,⁹³ et pour le refus éthique de tout dire, que l'on lit également dans l'épilogue de l'*Orestis*⁹⁴ – il a donc conscience d'un *Ovidius ethicus* dont le Moyen Âge se souviendra aussi.⁹⁵

On relève un écart similaire dans la préface *Romul.* 1 dédiée à son maître Félicianus et consacrée dans sa première partie à Orphée (*Romul.* 1. 1-11). L'histoire d'Orphée y perd totalement son caractère de passion tragique de la vulgate augus-

poésie contemporaine d'Ovide (p. 329). Elle qualifie Médée qui rajeunit Éson de 'magicienne créatrice de printemps' (p. 336).

⁹¹ Bureau 2015, p. 291 y voit 'une *aemulatio* directe avec Ovide' ; il lit Médée 'comme une forme d'*adynaton* largement aussi étonnant que les métamorphoses ovidiennes', ce qui n'est pas très clair ; il considère que le clin d'œil à Lucain est secondaire 'en raison de la place stratégique du vers 1' (note 17 p. 291), ce qui selon moi n'exclut pas pour autant la contamination, suggérée par la place métrique empruntée à Lucain et le contenu du *prooemium*. Galli Milić 2015, p. 329 montre aussi une référence à Stace au premier vers des cinq parties du poème qu'elle distingue : *Theb.* I. 416 *Tydea fert animus pour Romul.* 10. 1.

⁹² Pour le commentaire de Drac. *Romul.* 10. 13-16 et *Ov. fast.* III. 323-326, pour le commentaire détaillé, voir Stoehr-Monjou 2007, p. 503 remanié dans à paraître c.

⁹³ Cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2007, pp. 488-490 et à paraître c à propos de la clause *de matre creatur* (Drac. *Romul.* 8. 7) que je considère comme inspirée de *Ov. trist.* III. 14. 13-14 : *Palladis exemplo de me sine matre creata / carmina sunt ; stirps haec progeniesque mea est.*

⁹⁴ On a la même chose dans l'épilogue d'*Orestis* 971 où le poète relève la honte de dire certains crimes : *innumerumque nefas, quod sit narrare pudoris* (le ms. *A* donne *pudori* mais n'est pas retenu par les éditeurs Vollmer 1905, Bouquet 1995 Grillone 2009), qui est inspiré de *Ov. met.* VII. 687 *quae petit ille refert cetera* narrare pudori – il s'agit de Céphale. L'édition de la CUF (G. Lafaye 1928, revue par H. Le Bonniec 2000) ne retient pas cette leçon de *M* (*Martianus Florentinus* 225) ni celle avec *pudore*, présente, entre autres, dans *F* (*Martianus Florentinus* 223) et les éditions *principes* (Romana 1471, Veneta 1486 et Aldina 1502) mais elle donne : *quae patitur pudor ille refert et cetera narrat* tandis que Anderson 1998² édite *quae petit, ille refert et cetera : nota pudori*. Dracontius constitue un témoignage indirect pour garder la leçon de *M*.

⁹⁵ Cf. Thomas 1958, p. 147 citant E. K. Rand, *Ovid and his Influence*, London, 1925, pp. 131-144 (*non uidi*). E. Thomas montre dans son article que Juvénal apprécie le souci d'Ovide pour les comportements humains et son attitude satirique envers les dieux en citant notamment *Iuu. sat.* 10. 354-356.

téenne⁹⁶ et Dracontius supprime l'échec et la mort du chantré racontés par Ovide (*met.* XI. 1-66). Il évoque Orphée charmant les animaux ennemis afin de célébrer, dans la lignée de Claudien et de Prudence, Felicianus en nouvel Orphée(-Christ).⁹⁷ On y relève un seul souvenir textuel ovidien, apparemment très ténu mais qui révèle une lecture fine du poète augustéen. Quand Dracontius évoque le paysage où Orphée charme les animaux, il mentionne les ornes (*Romul.* 1. 3 : *inter ornos, propter amnes adque montes algidos*) qu'Ovide est le premier à citer dans le mythe d'Orphée (*met.* x. 101), ce que Stace reprend dans sa silve pour l'anniversaire de Lucain.⁹⁸ Ces arbres majestueux sont absents dans la préface sur Orphée de Claudien.⁹⁹ Or ils ont une couleur épique et Ovide cite donc l'orne dans son catalogue des vingt-six arbres qui représentent les différents genres (épique, bucolique, érotique) entremêlés dans ses *Métamorphoses*.¹⁰⁰ Dracontius annonce discrètement une volonté de renouveler l'*epos* dans son œuvre.

Au contraire d'Orphée et Médée, les sujets des pièces 11 (Hylas), 4 (Hercule en lutte contre l'Hydre de Lerne), 8 (*Rapt d'Hélène*) et 9 (le sort du cadavre d'Hector) des *Romulea* et l'histoire d'Oreste sont peu présents dans les *Métamorphoses*. Ovide fait une ellipse à propos des douze travaux d'Hercule qu'il ne raconte pas.¹⁰¹ L'éthopée d'Hercule (*Romul.* 4) est fondamentalement une *aemulatio* avec des monologues de l'*Hercules*

⁹⁶ Cf. Verg. *georg.* IV. 453-527 et Ov. *met.* x. 1-105 (Orphée et Eurydice) et *met.* XI. 1-66 (mort d'Orphée).

⁹⁷ Claud. *praef. rapt.* II sur Orphée aux animaux et Prud. *cath.* 9 sur le chantré David. Cf. Stoehr-Monjou 2005 pour un commentaire de *Romul.* 1. 1-16.

⁹⁸ Stat. *silv.* II. 7. 44 *nec plectro Geticas mouebis ornos*. L'expression devient après lui proverbiale, cf. Charlet 2000, note a p. 58.

⁹⁹ Il n'emploie pas *ornos* dans cette préface au *Rapt* mais dans celle aux *Noces d'Honorius* évoquant le pouvoir du chant d'Apollon lors des noces de Thétis et de Pélée. Cf. Claud. *praef. Hon. nupt.* 17-18 : *Tum Phoebus, quo saxa domat, quo pertrahit ornos, / pectine temptavit nobiliore lyram* Rapprochement signalé dans le ThLL IX, 2, col. 1034, l. 81-82.

¹⁰⁰ Pöschl 1960 a montré que ce catalogue, loin d'être schématique et rhétorique, a une dimension métapoétique très raffinée dans sa structure et sa métrique. Voir aussi Galand-Hallyn 1994, p. 230. On rencontre le mot dans des comparaisons épiques auxquelles, comme arbre montagnard, il se prête particulièrement bien. Cf. Verg. *Aen.* II. 626 ; x. 766.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Ov. *met.* IX. 134-135 : *Longa fuit medii mora temporis actaque magni / Herculis implerant terras odiumque nouercae*.

furens et de l'*Hercules Oetaeus*.¹⁰² Cependant pour le passage concernant la destruction de l'Hydre (*Romul.* 4. 46-53), je n'ai trouvé aucune réminiscence de ces deux tragédies ; en revanche, la clausule *colla draconum*¹⁰³ est un emprunt strict d'Ovide (*met.* VII. 220 *frenataque colla draconum*) déjà étudié à propos de l'auto-imitation. Par ailleurs, quand Acheloüs raconte sa lutte contre son rival Hercule (*met.* IX), il rapporte un discours de ce dernier alors qu'il s'était transformé en serpent : le héros le compara à l'Hydre de Lerne pour lui signifier qu'il restait inférieur à ce monstre déjà vaincu. Hercule insiste sur les blessures rendant l'Hydre féconde et sur le surgissement continu de têtes, jusqu'à ce qu'il les brûle totalement (*met.* IX. 74 *perussi / perurat* en *Romul.* 4. 52).¹⁰⁴ Dracontius choisit lui aussi de donner la parole à Hercule mais de manière directe et en inversant la tonalité : le ton plutôt victorieux du héros chez le poète augustéen est absent chez Dracontius, dont la plus grande partie de l'éthopée rapporte les doutes d'Hercule, jusqu'au moment où Minerve lui conseille de brûler les têtes du monstre (*Romul.* 2. 50-53).¹⁰⁵ Puis le poème s'achève sur le silence et un exploit encore inaccompli.

En ce qui concerne la guerre de Troie, Dracontius choisit des épisodes qui ne sont pas spécifiquement traités par Ovide dans les *Métamorphoses*. Cependant il se rapproche de la *retractatio* de l'*Iliade* ovidienne, qui dénonce les valeurs héroïques, en particulier à travers Achille,¹⁰⁶ ce que l'on retrouve dans la suasoire sur le cadavre d'Hector.¹⁰⁷ Si l'on considère le *Rapt d'Hélène*, la lettre d'CEnone abandonnée par Pâris (*her.* 5) et les lettres

¹⁰² Stoechr-Monjou 2007, pp. 142-146 ; Ead. à paraître c, 2^e partie.

¹⁰³ Drac. *Romul.* 4. 48 *Vt crescunt gaudentque mori fera colla draconum*.

¹⁰⁴ Ov. *met.* IX. 70-74 : *Vulneribus fecunda suis erat illa nec ullum / de comitum numero caput est impune recisum / quin gemino ceruix berede ualentior esset. / Hanc ego ramosam natis e caede colubris / crescentemque malo domui domitamque perussi*.

¹⁰⁵ Voir Stoechr-Monjou, à paraître a.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Fabre-Serris 1995, pp. 97-113. Le poète augustéen remplace la colère d'Achille par la colère et le chagrin de plusieurs parents à la mort de leur enfant ; en outre Neptune fait le lien entre les différents épisodes narrés en tant que père endeuillé et fondateur de Troie – oublié par Dracontius qui mentionne le seul Apollon mais en fait un dieu rancunier (*Romul.* 8. 184-187), cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2016a, pp. 148-149.

¹⁰⁷ Stoechr-Monjou 2015a et Stoechr-Monjou 2015b.

entre Pâris et Hélène (*her.* 16-17) constituent un intertexte dont Dracontius s'inspire avec une certaine discrétion.¹⁰⁸ L'insistance quasi obsessionnelle sur Pâris en tant que berger dans le poème tardif¹⁰⁹ rappelle comment C  none se souvient de leur vie champ  tre : ¹¹⁰ elle l'aima, bien que pauvre et simple berger (*pastor*).¹¹¹ Le po  te signale cette influence : lorsque P  ris aspire    quitter sa vie de berger, apr  s l'  num  ration de tout ce qu'il a d  sormais en horreur dans cette existence simple,¹¹² il ajoute dans un troisi  me vers son d  go  t pour C  none : *non placet Oenone, sed iam prope turpis habetur*.¹¹³ Quant aux lettres   chang  es entre P  ris et H  l  ne, il faut bien s  r tenir compte de la part de persuasion des propos des deux personnages mais c'est justement l   que Dracontius se distingue, voire s'oppose    Ovide. Par exemple, P  ris affirme que le jour o   il a   t   retrouv   ajoute un jour de f  te    Troie (*her.* 16. 92) : Dracontius y r  pond en insistant sur le fait que P  ris arrive    Troie le jour de la f  te de sa reconstruction, accompagn   de funestes pr  sages, ce qui souligne symboliquement qu'il est cause de sa chute (*Romul.* 8. 71-78). Plus loin, P  ris   num  re ses nobles anc  tres (*her.* 16. 173-178). Or Dracontius joue avec cet   loge : au moment de la rencontre entre H  l  ne et P  ris, la jeune femme lui demande de quelle souche il est issu (*Romul.* 8. 503 *qua stirpe creatus*).¹¹⁴ Le po  te pr  cise que le jeune homme, perfide, ne r  pond pas    la

¹⁰⁸ Simons 2005, pp. 270-271, 284-285 y ajoute *ars* I. 607-610 et *ars* II. 359-360, 365-366, 369-372 notamment pour la rh  torique de P  ris contre M  n  las.

¹⁰⁹ On rel  ve 27 occurrences de *pastor*    propos de P  ris en *Romul.* 8 aux vers 2, 31, 34, 40, 65, 70, 76, 90, 97, 98, 117, 138, 148, 177, 190, 217, 403, 417, 432, 489, 498, 502, 507, 542, 592, 621 et 638.

¹¹⁰ Ov. *her.* 5. 13-16 : *Saepe greges inter requieuimus arbore tecti / mixtaque cum foliis praebuit herba torum ; / saepe super stramen fenoque iacentibus alto / defensa est humili cana pruina casa.*

¹¹¹ Ov. *her.* 5. 79 *At cum pauper eras armentaue pastor agebas / nulla nisi Oenone pauperis uxor erat.*

¹¹² *Romul.* 8. 61-62 : *Iam grex horretur, fontes casa pascua siluae / flumina rura pigent nec fistula dulcis amatur.* C  none mentionne l'humble cabane (*her.* 5. 16 *humili... casa* /).

¹¹³ *Romul.* 8. 63. Simons 2005, pp. 241-242 signale aussi le th  me central des *fastidia* de P  ris en *her.* 16. 51-52, 89-92, 99-102 que Dracontius reprend aussi en *Romul.* 8. 68-71.

¹¹⁴ C'est une clausule lucr  tienne (Lucr. I. 733) devenue clich   : ainsi Cadmus demande    ses soldats de ne pas oublier leur origine : *met.* III. 543 *Este, precor, memores, qua stirpe creati.*

question mais entreprend de la séduire (*Romul.* 8. 507-515). Alors, Hélène affirme que tous connaissent en fait son origine (8. 531-532 *Quae sit tua, pulcher, origo / te reticente magis dudum cognouimus omnes*), qui est un gage de gloire. Enfin, Pâris l'encourage à ne pas craindre 'de violer l'amour conjugal et de tromper les chastes droits de la couche légitime' (*her.* 16. 285-286), ce qui au contraire constitue le cœur de la faute de Pâris. De fait, on relève aussi une proximité avec les propos accusatoires d'Œnone évoquant Ménélas :

Ov. *her.* 5. 101-102

Vt minor Atrides temerati foedera lecti / clamat

Ov. *her.* 16. 285-286

Venerem temerare *maritam*

castaque legitimi fallere iura tori.

Drac. *Romul.* 8. 3-6

Nam prodimus *hostem*

hospitis et thalami populantem iura mariti,

foedera coniugii, consortia blanda pudoris,

materiem generis, sobolis spem, pignora prolis ¹¹⁵

Dans ce *prooemium* programmatique, Dracontius procède à une *retractatio* car il s'oppose totalement aux propos prêtés à Pâris dans la lecture élégiaque de l'*epistula* 16 : il dénonce Pâris en amplifiant tout ce qui est souillé par son adultère aux vers 5-6 ¹¹⁶ et ce faisant offre un éloge du mariage et de l'amour conjugal.

Dans la lettre 17 qui présente le point de vue d'Hélène, cette dernière récuse chaque argument de Pâris et cède peu à peu, mais jamais totalement. Elle reprend point à point ses arguments et commence par critiquer l'audace du jeune homme et sa trahison des lois de l'hospitalité (*her.* 17. 5-6 *Ausus es hospitii temeratis, aduena, sacris / legitimam nuptae sollicitare fidem*). Mais quand elle lui demande s'il est un hôte ou un ennemi (*Romul.* 8. 12 *Qui sic intrabas, hospes an hostis eras ?*), cette question est

¹¹⁵ *Romul.* 8. 3-6 : 'En effet, je présente l'ennemi de son hôte, qui bafoue les droits du mari à la couche nuptiale, le pacte de mariage, la douce communauté de pudeur, l'origine de la lignée, l'espoir de descendance et les promesses de postérité'. (trad. É. Wolff légèrement modifiée).

¹¹⁶ Voir A. Stoeck-Monjou 2007, pp. 479-482 et à paraître c.

un aveu de faiblesse. Dracontius joue avec ce souvenir ovidien *hospes an hostis eras* ? quand il crée l'oxymoron *hostem / hospitis* (*Romul.* 8. 4) mais il répond surtout à cette interrogation qu'il fut bien un ennemi. Enfin, ces deux lettres constituent aussi l'intertexte à la scène de rencontre entre les deux personnages : par *retractatio*, Dracontius au contraire montre la naissance rapide de l'amour et une Hélène plus active et décidée que Pâris, jusque dans la fuite (*Romul.* 8. 488-566).¹¹⁷

B. *Hylas* : mise à distance de la métamorphose et de la passion

Je voudrais finir par une réflexion sur l'imitation d'Ovide dans *Hylas* et l'*Oreste* parce que ces deux poèmes relevant de l'*epos* sont situés au début et à la fin de la carrière de Dracontius.

Si l'on songe à l'épigramme *De origine rosarum* qui donne une étiologie de la rose inconnue d'Ovide et rivalise avec ce poète qui raconte plusieurs métamorphoses en fleur,¹¹⁸ il n'est pas exclu que Dracontius ait voulu se démarquer d'Ovide en choisissant un thème qu'il a largement traité dans les *Métamorphoses* (la mort prématurée d'une jeune homme aimé par un dieu ou une nymphe)¹¹⁹ mais à travers une histoire absente de ce poème, celle d'Hylas. C'est ce qu'il fait dans le *Rapt d'Hélène*, en disant explicitement qu'il raconte ce que Homère et Virgile ont délaissé (*Romul.* 8. 22-23). Mon hypothèse est que Dracontius, au début de sa carrière poétique, choisit de rivaliser avec Ovide *in absentia* et par *retractatio* en donnant un autre sens au rapt d'Hylas dans un poème épique assez bref (163 vers).

Le *prooemium* est paradoxal par la place conférée à la passion amoureuse. En effet, le poète ne présente pas les nymphes comme

¹¹⁷ Quand elle l'exhorte à se hâter de fuir (*Romul.* 8. 551-555), Dracontius prend à contre-pied un hypotexte ovidien (*ars* II. 5-12) puisqu'Hélène reproche à Pâris d'agir 'à l'encontre de l'amant ovidien', cf. Galli Milić 2016, p. 212.

¹¹⁸ On songe à Narcisse (*Ov. met.* III. 509-510), Crocus (*met.* IV. 283), Attis (*met.* X. 104), Hyacinthe (*met.* X. 221-226), Adonis (*met.* X. 731-739), Ajax (*met.* XIII. 394-398) réunis en *fast.* V. 223-228. Cf. Vial 2010, pp. 221-231 sur ces différentes métamorphoses.

¹¹⁹ Je pense en particulier à Narcisse aimé par Écho (*met.* III. 339-510) et Hyacinthe par Apollon (*met.* X. 162-219), car ils sont justement cités par Dracontius (*Romul.* 2. 136). Voir Stoehr-Monjou à paraître b.

coupables de ce rapt, alors qu'elles enlèvent bien Hylas. Il affirme que son projet est de chanter la destinée d'un jeune homme 'rendue meilleure grâce à l'ardeur des Nymphes' : *Fata canam pueri Nympharum uersa calore / in melius* (*Romul.* 2. 1-2).¹²⁰ La passion des nymphes n'est donc pas dénoncée car l'enlèvement constitue un motif de gloire pour Hylas. Or, ce faisant, Dracontius s'écarte de la lecture d'Ovide, qui nomme Hylas pour sa beauté et sa jeunesse (*tener*)¹²¹ et dénonce le crime (*crimine* après la coupe) des nymphes : *Naiadumque tener // crimine raptus* Hylas (*Ov. ars* II. 110). Dracontius connaît vraisemblablement ce vers auquel il emprunte l'alliance *raptus Hylas* à deux reprises dans le poème en différentes places métriques.¹²² D'autre part, quand il pose la question du motif du rapt, Dracontius fait écho au cri désespéré de Thysbée découvrant Pyrame mort :

Ov. *met.* IV. 142

Pyrame, clamauit, quis te mihi casus ademit ?

Drac. *Romul.* 2. 2-3

quis casus ademit / Alcidi [...] ?

Ainsi, la question n'est pas si neutre car elle introduit la souffrance de perdre l'être aimé et semble faire subtilement allusion à l'amour liant Hylas et Hercule,¹²³ que le poète élude par ailleurs.¹²⁴ Ce souvenir ovidien situé en un moment clé place en fait discrètement le poème sous le signe de la passion amoureuse destructrice puisque Thysbée se tue. De fait, parmi les quatre catalo-

¹²⁰ De fait, après Valérius Flaccus qui imagine que Junon se venge d'Hercule en enlevant son protégé (Val. Flac. III. 510-520), Dracontius justifie le rapt par le désir de vengeance de Vénus : humiliée par la publicité faite à ses amours avec Mars par le dieu Soleil et l'amante de celui-ci, la nymphe Clymène, la déesse demande à Cupidon de la frapper ainsi que ses compagnes. Elles aussi souffriront car elles ne pourront assouvir leur passion (*Romul.* 2. 68-70).

¹²¹ Ovide délaisse Hylas dans les *Métamorphoses*, mais il le mentionne brièvement dans l'*Art d'aimer* comme un *exemplum* pour dire combien la beauté est éphémère.

¹²² Cf. Drac. *Romul.* 2. 129 et 145. Cette alliance rare est créée par Ovide, elle est reprise par Martial (*epigr.* v. 48. 5 et x. 4. 3) puis Dracontius. L'épigramme *AL* 69 R = *Versus Serpentina* 31 Zurli sur Hylas la reprend dans le refrain, sans juxtaposer les termes : *raptus amator Hylas* : (v. 1-2 éd. Zurli ; Riese : aquator pour amator). Cf. Zurli-Scivoletto-Paolucci 2008 *ad loc* et Stoechr-Monjou à paraître b.

¹²³ Weber 1995, p. 141 note 9.

¹²⁴ Weber 1995 ; Stoechr-Monjou à paraître c.

gues d'histoires d'amour du poème, le premier montre l'effrayant pouvoir d'Amour.¹²⁵

En réponse à Vénus qui lui demande son aide – en une scène contaminant deux prières de Vénus à Cupidon, chez Virgile et Ovide¹²⁶ –, Cupidon prononce un long discours où il se vante de son pouvoir (*Romul.* 2. 19-44).¹²⁷ Il se glorifie tout d'abord d'avoir soumis Jupiter à son pouvoir (vv. 19-27), puis se dit prêt à soumettre d'autres divinités (vv. 38-35 : la vierge Athéna, Neptune, Galatée et Thétis) ou d'autres humains (vv. 36-44) selon la volonté de sa mère. La première partie du discours (vv. 20-27) rivalise par la structure globale et le détail du texte avec le catalogue des aventures galantes de Jupiter tissées par Arachné lors de son duel avec Pallas (*Ov. met.* VI. 103-112).¹²⁸ Plusieurs éléments méritent d'être retenus : Dracontius y est visiblement influencé par l'humour et l'ironie d'Ovide dans la manière de présenter Jupiter. Cependant, ce qui était une provocation d'Arachné face à Pallas devient un discours d'auto-satisfaction de Cupidon, ce qui constitue sûrement une réponse à Ovide car il va plus loin que ce dernier.¹²⁹ En outre, il supprime complètement la dimension métapoétique puisqu'il passe d'une *ekphrasis* à un catalogue.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Les trois autres catalogues servent, dans les discours de nymphes, à justifier l'enlèvement d'Hylas et à le rassurer.

¹²⁶ Cf. Vollmer 1905, p. 133. Chez Virgile (*Verg. Aen.* I. 664-690), Vénus lui demande son aide pour rendre Didon amoureuse d'Énée, chez Ovide (*met.* v. 363-384), elle lui demande de frapper Pluton pour qu'il aime Proserpine – le motif du rapt est commun avec Dracontius. Bright p. 13. Voir Weber 1995, p. 148 pour un commentaire de cette *contaminatio* et *ad loc.* Selent 2011, pp. 174-176 relève qu'il y a plus de parallèles textuels avec Virgile qu'avec Ovide. Ces discours disent la puissance d'Amour. Chez Ovide en particulier, la déesse partage son pouvoir sur la nature avec Cupidon tandis que chez Dracontius elle se dit soumise à lui (*Romul.* 2. 9), à quoi le discours du dieu fait écho. Selent y voit une hiérarchie entre les deux divinités. Wasyl 2011, p. 77 ne relève pas l'*aemulatio* avec Virgile et Ovide ; dans son chapitre sur Dracontius, l'intertextualité n'est quasi pas présente.

¹²⁷ Cette réponse constitue aussi une réponse à Virgile et Ovide où le dieu obéit simplement, cf. Weber 1995, p. 161.

¹²⁸ Cf. Stoehr-Monjou à paraître c. Les lignes qui suivent sont un résumé de certains aspects des pages consacrées à ce catalogue.

¹²⁹ La présence d'Athéna potentielle victime d'Amour (*Romul.* 2. 28-30) est aussi une réponse à la Vénus ovidienne qui remarque que Diane et Pallas échappent à ses lois (*Ov. met.* v. 375-376), cf. Selent 2011, pp. 179-180.

¹³⁰ Galand 1994, pp. 206-208.

Cupidon se déclare prêt à susciter des amours impies et incestueuses. C'est l'occasion de citer Perdicas, Myrrha (v. 41), Pasiphaé (vv. 43-44) et Phèdre (v. 44).¹³¹ Or quand Ovide mentionne l'histoire de Myrrha dans les *Métamorphoses*, il affirme que Cupidon nie être responsable de cet amour pour un père et qu'il en accuse les Furies.¹³² Chez Dracontius, Cupidon au contraire se vante d'avoir suscité cette passion contre nature et cherche à faire souffrir. Cet écart conscient de Dracontius avec Ovide suggère une vision plus noire d'Amour que chez le poète augustéen, et peut-être une trace de polémique antipaïenne.

Dans la deuxième partie du poème, trois autres brefs catalogues de passions amoureuses se succèdent, qui figurent dans des discours des nymphes. Deux réminiscences d'Ovide dans le vers introduisant le premier catalogue placent ces énumérations sous le patronage d'Ovide.¹³³ Lorsque Cupidon est au bord de la source et que les nymphes aperçoivent Hylas, l'une d'elle prend la parole. La fin de vers *affata sorores* rappelle Minerve qui s'adresse aux neuf muses (*doctas sorores*) car elle souhaite voir une merveille (v. 258 *mirabile*), la source Hippocrène née de Pégase. Plus intéressant est le début du vers *ex quibus una* : il vient de l'épisode d'Orphée, au moment où l'une des Ménades apostrophe ses compagnes quand elle reconnaît le chanfre puis qu'elle le frappe. L'intertexte servirait à dénoncer les paroles ainsi introduites suggérant que c'est bien un crime qui va être commis, malgré toutes les précautions oratoires :

¹³¹ Cf. Weber 1995, pp. 158-159. Malamud 1993 relève des parallèles structurels entre *Hylas* et l'*Aegritudo Perdicae* qui relate cet inceste. De Gaetano 2009, pp. 391-395 souligne à juste titre l'influence scolaire sur cette énumération ; cependant il me semble plus douteux de voir à partir des parallèles entre ces deux poèmes et les *Laudes Dei* la trace d'une polémique chrétienne contre l'inceste : comme le dit Schetter 1991, p. 110 l'idée figure déjà chez les poètes païens et est relativement banale. En l'occurrence, l'inceste est clairement condamné chez Ovide (par ex. *met.* x. 307 et 322) par les personnages eux-mêmes.

¹³² Cf. Ov. *met.* x. 311-314. Opposition relevée par B. Weber, 1995, p. 159 et que De Gaetano ne reprend pas car elle porte l'accent sur l'histoire de Perdicas absente chez Ovide. Stucchi 2006, p. 107 note 19 remarque à juste titre que Dracontius insère l'épisode de Perdica dans un contexte ovidien en le reliant à Myrrha.

¹³³ Je n'y vois donc pas un simple emprunt phonique.

Ov. *met.* XI. 6
E quibus una, leues iactato crine per auras :

Ov. *met.* v. 255 :
 Constitit et doctas sic est *affata sorores*

Drac. *Romul.* 2. 101
Ex quibus una tamen cunctas *affata sorores*

Mais si l'on ne fait pas cette lecture critique pour *e quibus una*, la contamination ovidienne reste un signal d'entrée dans le monde du mythe. Ces trois catalogues ont deux points communs : ils s'opposent aux propos de Cupidon, réjouit d'humilier dieux et hommes et de les soumettre à son pouvoir ; ils éludent l'issue fatale ou malheureuse de ces amours car les trois discours ont une fonction persuasive : justifier d'enlever et d'aimer Hylas. Cela est particulièrement net dans les cas d'Adonis, Hyacinthe et Narcisse, où la métamorphose en fleur est aussi absente : Dracontius choisit donc une *retractatio* ovidienne quand il écrit par exemple *nos Hyacinthus amat, noster Narcissus ab undis* (*Romul.* 2. 136).¹³⁴

Enfin, il apparaît clairement que Dracontius refuse de décrire la métamorphose.¹³⁵ Dans *Hylas*, il cite seulement le résultat de manière très allusive : par exemple le mot *cycnus* renvoie à la métamorphose pour séduire Lédè (*Romul.* 2. 24). Mais surtout cette métamorphose est l'occasion de montrer l'avilissement du dieu Jupiter sous l'effet de la passion.¹³⁶ De même dans l'épigramme *De origine rosarum*, Dracontius se contente de dire que l'épine se revêt de rouge (*ros. 5 uestitur spina rubore*), qu'elle reçoit le présent du parfum (*ros. 6 munus odoris habet*), qu'elle recouvre l'épine vivace d'une gemme flamboyante (*ros. 12 Viuacem ut spinam flammae gemma tegat*) et il n'emprunte aucun intertexte à Ovide. Il ne décrit pas le *processus* de métamorphose dans son œuvre profane car elle relève de la magie.¹³⁷ Dans *Hylas*, Dra-

¹³⁴ Cf. Stoechr-Monjou à paraître b.

¹³⁵ Il montre Nabuchodonosor *devenu* bœuf puis *redevenu* humain en *satisf.* 31-38 et non le processus de métamorphose. Voir Filisini dans le présent volume pp. 347-348.

¹³⁶ On a la même chose dans *Le rapt d'Hélène* et *Médée* à propos d'Europe, cf. Stoechr-Monjou 2014b, pp. 92-95.

¹³⁷ Viarre 1959, p. 330 : la métamorphose 'apparaît comme l'acte magique

contius met donc subtilement à distance la métamorphose et la passion amoureuse, en particulier celle des dieux, qui sont pourtant souvent jugées caractéristiques du poète Ovide.¹³⁸ Qu'en est-il dans l'*Orestis* qui raconte les conséquences funestes de la passion amoureuse de Clytemnestre, le meurtre d'Agamemnon puis de ses assassins avec la vengeance d'Oreste ?

C. *Orestis* ou un jeu de cache-cache avec Ovide

Nous avons déjà vu l'importance métrique d'Ovide dans ce poème qui va du retour d'Agamemnon à la purification d'Oreste. Or l'histoire d'Oreste ne trouve pas d'équivalent dans les *Métamorphoses*. Quant à l'*epistula* 8 d'Hermione captive de Pyrrhus à Oreste, elle est centrée sur le rapt et ne s'attarde pas sur le matricide.¹³⁹ Dracontius signale toutefois l'*aemulatio* par la reprise d'un hémistiche en même place métrique :

Ov. *her.* 8. 9-10
 Surdior ille freto *clamantem nomen Orestis* / *traxit*
 Drac. *Orest.* 815
 dum tamen *eripiam* *clamantem nomen Orestis*.

Le contexte est strictement identique : chez Ovide, Hermione évoque le moment où, enlevée, elle appelle Oreste à l'aide. Chez Dracontius, Oreste apprend la nouvelle du rapt et annonce qu'il va l'arracher à Pyrrhus. Ce vers conclusif du discours d'Oreste apparaît aussi comme une réponse à Hermione qu'il a entendue puisque *traxit* s'oppose à *eripiam*. De fait, il agit sans tarder et tue Pyrrhus (*Orest.* 816-819) : à cet égard, Oreste apparaît

parfait' et elle est 'un grossissement littéraire du changement opéré par la magie' (p. 331). Vial 2010, pp. 71-73 relève le lien intime entre magie et métamorphose mais souligne les échecs de Médée et Circé : elle en conclut que la magie est une 'variante mineure de la métamorphose' (p. 73).

¹³⁸ Le plan de Herescu 1958 est révélateur : après les études générales sur la rhétorique et la métrique, trois parties se succèdent : Le poète de l'amour, le poète des dieux et le poète de l'exil. Pour la métamorphose, cf. Vial 2010 sur les métamorphoses de la métamorphose chez Ovide.

¹³⁹ Hermione mentionne très brièvement le double meurtre en parlant des armes odieuses qu'Oreste porta contre les amants (Ov. *her.* 8. 49 *Arma inuidiosa tulisti*), mais seul Égisthe est cité (*her.* 8. 53-54).

comme un personnage littéraire.¹⁴⁰ Bref, le crime et l'acquittement, au cœur du poème tardif, ne sont pas centraux chez le poète augustéen.

Et pourtant, Ovide est essentiel pour exprimer le matricide : nous l'avons déjà vu pour les vers d'or sur la mort de Clytemnestre,¹⁴¹ et pour l'oxymoron programmatique *impietate pium* (*Orest.* 8). Or il est inspiré d'un épisode (Althée tuant son fils meurtrier de ses oncles) que Dracontius disperse en fait en trois autres passages différents de l'*Orestis* dans un jeu savant d'effets de symétrie et d'opposition, 'jeux de miroir dans lesquels les légendes se renvoient l'une l'autre leur image' comme l'écrit Jean Bouquet.¹⁴² J'y lis pour ma part un jeu de cache-cache avec Ovide (et avec le lecteur). Ainsi, au v. 12 du *prooemium* de l'*Orestis*, après le v. 8 *impietate pium* pour Oreste, Dracontius qualifie Iphigénie de *germana melior* (*Orest.* 12). Cette expression désigne justement Althée (*met.* VIII. 475) qui, 'meilleure sœur que mère', veut ainsi apaiser les ombres de ses frères (*consanguineas... leniat umbras*) en tuant Méléagre. Outre l'épisode d'Althée, ce vers 12 contamine probablement un autre souvenir ovidien, celui de Télèthuse qui, pour protéger sa fille, fait croire qu'elle est un garçon. Paolo Arduini suggère que le nom de l'enfant Iphis, proche d'Iphigénie, et l'analogie de situation (protéger un être cher) ont pu favoriser l'*aemulatio, fraude pia mendax*.¹⁴³ L'oxymoron *fraude pia* (*Orest.* 12) rapproche donc la sœur de son frère (*impietate pium* v. 8).

¹⁴⁰ C'est aussi le cas de Médée, cf. Galli Milić 2015, p. 326 note 15. Simons 2005, p. 342 écrit 'qu'Oreste cite Ov. *her.* 8. 9 [...] comme s'il avait lu la lettre' de sa fiancée l'appelant à l'aide. Elle remarque que Pyrrhus est un *Paris alter* chez Ovide (*her.* 8. 41) et Dracontius (*Romul.* 8. 897 discours de Molossos).

¹⁴¹ Il y a aussi l'influence de la mort de Polyxène (Ov. *met.* XIII. 479-480) sur *Orest.* 786-791, cf. Simons 2005, p. 340 et Stoehr-Monjou à paraître c.

¹⁴² Cf. Bouquet 1982, p. 184 pour la citation. Aux pp. 183-184, il étudie quatre allusions à l'épisode d'Althée mais il omet le parallèle entre *met.* VIII. 476 et *Orest.* 689-690 signalé (sans analyse) par L. Castagna 1995, p. 793. Grillone 2008, pp. 199-207 omet curieusement ces réminiscences du *prooemium* et l'épisode d'Althée disséminé dans le poème, alors qu'ils sont cités par Vollmer 1905.

¹⁴³ Cf. Arduini 1987, pp. 372-374. Son hypothèse, que L. Castagna ne reprend pas, me semble séduisante car, outre les arguments qu'il apporte, il y a souvenir d'un même poète dans ce vers pour faire d'Iphigénie une héroïne tragique.

Je vois un troisième souvenir de *met.* VIII. 475-477 plus loin dans le poème, lorsqu'Oreste arrive à Mycènes (*Orest.* 689-690). Même si on ne trouve pas d'emprunt textuel (à part le banal *sanguine* à une place métrique différente), Dracontius reprend et amplifie l'idée sur deux vers : la formulation est plus violente chez Dracontius car Oreste entend rassasier (*leniat* devient *satiabo*) par le sang (*sanguine*) les pénates paternels afin que l'ombre d'Agamemnon se sente vengée (*consanguineas umbras* est développé en *cineres paternos, umbra potens*) :

Ov. *met.* VIII. 475-477
incipit esse tamen *melior germana* parente
et, consanguineas ut sanguine leniat umbras,
impietate pia est.

Ov. *met.* VIII. 490
accipite inferias, uteri mala pignora nostri

Ov. *met.* IX. 711
indecepta pia mendacia fraude latebant

Orest. 8
impietate pium

Orest. 12
fraude pia mendax melior germana sacerdos

Orest. 689-690
sanguine si matris cineres satiabo paternos.
Sentiet umbra potens ultam se uindice nato

Orest. 769
accipito inferias, quas offero. Victima iusta est

De plus, une même apostrophe aux mânes (en début de vers *accipite* ~ *accipito inferias*) unit Althée et Oreste qui font de leur meurtre un sacrifice. Dracontius va plus loin dans cette logique car il supprime tout *pathos* : Althée dit son affection pour son fils (*met.* VIII. 490 *pignora*) alors qu'Oreste n'exprime aucune émotion et emploie le vocabulaire religieux technique ; il déshumanise sa mère, réduite au statut de victime légitime avant de la nommer (*Orest.* 769 *Victima iusta est* : / *macto Clytaemestram*). Ainsi, ce que Jean Bouquet ne signale pas, Dracontius utilise ces vers d'Ovide pour justifier *poétiquement* (d'un point de vue esthétique et éthique) le crime.

Enfin, l'interprétation de Dracontius à propos d'Oreste est aussi la *retractatio* d'un autre passage ovidien. Autrement dit, Dracontius utilise Ovide pour répondre à Ovide, poursuivant son jeu de cache-cache érudit. Dans les *Tristes*, pour dénoncer la cruauté de la terre où il est exilé, Ovide mentionne le culte de Diane taurique. C'est l'occasion d'évoquer les retrouvailles d'Oreste, accompagné de Pylade, avec Iphigénie, qui sont également décrites par Dracontius (*Orest.* 10-11 et 867-886). Le poète augustéen refuse de porter un jugement sur Oreste et considère que l'on ne peut dire s'il est pieux ou criminel, *dubium pius an sceleratus*, *Orestes* (*trist.* IV. 4, 69). Le parti-pris de Dracontius est, nous l'avons vu, strictement inverse puisqu'il écrit dans le *prooemium* programmatique qu'Oreste montre sa piété envers son père en commettant un acte impie, *impietate pium* (*Orest.* 8). Ainsi, il s'écarte d'Ovide parlant d'Oreste dans les *Tristes* pour en donner une interprétation à travers un autre mythe. Il y a là une présence/absence d'Ovide remarquable par le jeu paradoxal.

Conclusion

Dracontius ne revendique pas explicitement l'influence d'Ovide et en fait un usage paradoxal : elle est souvent en décalage, introduit parfois une dimension parodique, comme si Dracontius procédait de 'biais'. Ovide est pour l'orfèvre tardif un joyau qui influence son écriture et son esthétique dans le microcosme du vers. L'examen de la macrostructure des poèmes révèle qu'Ovide constitue aussi un point de référence incontournable, avec lequel Dracontius veut explicitement ou implicitement rivaliser, par l'absence, l'écart contextuel qui apporte une touche d'humour, la mise à distance ou la *retractatio*. L'influence si paradoxale d'Ovide chez Dracontius, que je ne relève pas ainsi pour d'autres poètes essentiels dans son œuvre comme Virgile, Lucain, Stace ou Claudien, suggère que le poète augustéen occupe une place particulière.

Tout d'abord, Ovide constitue un enjeu essentiel pour cerner la figure du poète. Ainsi dans l'épithalame écrit en prison, il y a une différence frappante avec la *Satisfactio* : Dracontius écarte l'influence du poète rélégué pour construire la *persona* du poète

incarcéré ; mais en même temps, il exprime son impuissance poétique dans la triple comparaison épique, comme pour mieux signaler cette absence, par d'autres intertextes d'Ovide que les *Tristes* et les *Pontiques*. Et si Dracontius ne rechigne pas à dire qui l'inspire (Félicianus, Homère, Virgile, Vénus, les Muses) sans citer le poète de Sulmone,¹⁴⁴ c'est que ce dernier lui sert à exprimer le devoir éthique qu'a le poète inspiré (*uates*) de garder des secrets et de se taire (*Medea* ; *Orestis*).

Dans sa poésie profane, Dracontius a donc été sensible à la complexité d'Ovide : *Ovidius ethicus* irrévérencieux à l'égard des dieux, Ovide chantre de l'amour charnel, Ovide souffrant de la rélévation. Cependant, il est trois aspects d'Ovide que Dracontius rejette : la métamorphose (il l'élude), la légèreté ou l'insouciance d'Ovide à traiter l'adultère (il le condamne sans ambiguïté), et enfin la fascination pour la magie (il la dénonce), qui plus est en utilisant Ovide pour dire la nécessité de se taire. Dracontius serait-il le relais (avec d'autres poètes tardifs ?) d'une lecture et réécriture paradoxale d'Ovide, dans la tension entre l'admiration sincère pour la beauté de ses vers, la conscience (qu'aura le Moyen Âge) d'un *Ovidius ethicus* mais aussi la méfiance ou la crainte pour certains de ses propos, bien avant l'*Ovide moralisé* ?

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¹⁴⁴ Stochr-Monjou à paraître c, Partie I.

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Résumé

Cet article veut montrer que l'influence d'Ovide sur l'œuvre profane de Dracontius s'avère paradoxale. Dans le microcosme du vers, Ovide apparaît tel un joyau pour l'orfèvre carthaginois qui sertit des *iuncturae* métriques, des clausules et des oxymorons ovidiens sur ses vers. Deux modalités de l'imitation d'Ovide ressortent particulièrement : l'auto-imitation et le vers d'or (*uersus aureus*). À travers le poète augustéen, Dracontius établit certes un dialogue avec son lecteur mais aussi avec Ovide lui-même. Or dans le macrocosme des poèmes, ce dialogue est plus complexe et Dracontius peut mettre à distance, parfois avec humour, Ovide et sa lecture du mythe.

Abstract

The purpose of the present paper is to show that there are paradoxes concerning Ovid's influence on Dracontius's profane poems. First in the verse microcosm, Ovid is used as a gem by the late antique jeweller who sets ovidian metrical *iuncturae*, clausuls, oxymora on his lines. The Carthaginian poet uses two noticeable imitation tricks : auto-imitation and golden verse (*uersus aureus*). Through the Augustean poet, Dracontius establishes a dialog with the reader but also with Ovid himself. In the macrocosm of the poems, however, the dialogue is more complex and Dracontius sometimes takes some liberties with Ovid and in his reading of the myth, with the occasional touch of humour.

BENJAMIN GOLDLUST

LA PRÉSENCE D'OVIDE
DANS L'*APPENDIX MAXIMIANI*
(*CARMINA* GARROD-SCHETTER) :
ENJEUX THÉORIQUES ET PRATIQUES
D'INTERTEXTUALITÉ

*Lasciurus quidem in herois quoque Ovidius et nimium amator ingenii sui,
laudandus tamen partibus*¹.

*Ovidii Medea uidetur mihi ostendere quantum ille uir praestare potuerit,
si ingenio suo imperare quam indulgere maluisset*².

L'étude du statut qu'occupe Ovide dans la réception des classiques à l'époque tardive appelle très probablement des analyses plus nuancées qu'on ne le penserait de prime abord. Ovide est pour nous, aujourd'hui, l'un des deux ou trois plus grands poètes latins, mais sans doute faut-il faire la part des choses entre l'image d'Ovide que nous avons désormais, constituée à partir de sa réception humaniste et moderne, mais aussi déjà médiévale³, et le regard que portaient sur lui les Anciens, dès l'époque impériale puis à l'époque tardive⁴. Le fait est que le poète n'a pas échappé, dès l'époque impériale, à un certain nombre de critiques, parfois assez vives, de la part de Quintilien notamment. Dans l'Antiquité tardive, Ovide est évidemment beaucoup cité, beaucoup imité, et parfois même détourné, mais sur quelles bases et pour quelles raisons ?

En réalité, la question se pose avec d'autant plus d'acuité que le poète ne fait pas partie de la catégorie que la tradition scolaire a appelé les 'auteurs du quadrigé'⁵. Ovide n'a pas non plus le sta-

¹ Quint. *inst.* x. 1. 88.

² Quint. *inst.* x. 1. 98. Voir encore les critiques du même registre adressée à Ovide par Sen. *contr.* II. 2 (10). 8 et 12, ainsi que IX. 5. 17.

³ Voir notamment Gallo – Nicastri 1995, Szkilnik – Harf-Lancner – Mathey-Maille 2009, pp. 21-32, et tout récemment Miller – Newlands 2014.

⁴ Voir Fielding 2014, pp. 100-113.

⁵ Sur le 'quadrigé' du grammairien Arusianus Messius (Térence, Salluste, Cicéron, Virgile), voir Marrou 1975, p. 81.

tut d'onction obligatoire que la tradition confère avant tout à Virgile. On sait ainsi par exemple que, dans l'esprit d'un poète épique tardif, il était inconcevable de prétendre écrire une nouvelle épopée sans, d'une manière ou d'une autre, se placer dans le sillage de Virgile. Rien de tel pour Ovide, dont la réception n'a pas, à première vue, le caractère systématique occupé par celle du poète de Mantoue. On pourrait d'ailleurs même penser que la réception médiévale d'Ovide est sensiblement plus riche que sa réception dans l'Antiquité tardive – une impression peut-être cependant artificiellement renforcée par le nombre et l'importance des études sur la réception médiévale d'Ovide⁶, en comparaison avec l'insuffisance de l'étude globale de sa réception tardive, à laquelle le présent ouvrage va opportunément mettre un terme.

Mais pourquoi Ovide ne fait-il pas l'objet d'une réception comparable à celle de Virgile ? Un élément de réponse semble venir de ce qu'il s'agit d'un poète qui n'est pas aussi nettement associé à un genre littéraire bien déterminé que Virgile l'est à l'épopée et qu'il a, au contraire, délibérément cultivé plusieurs genres. Dans la mesure où l'Antiquité tardive a pleinement conscience de la hiérarchie des genres, fixée dans le livre 10 de Quintilien, et qu'elle joue beaucoup avec les frontières génériques pour les déplacer, les subvertir ou les transgresser, on peut émettre l'hypothèse que la réception d'un grand poète répond d'abord à une logique générique et, concrètement, qu'elle est prioritairement conditionnée par l'appartenance au genre même dans lequel ce poète s'est illustré. Or Ovide est à la fois un poète élégiaque, un poète 'épique' *lato sensu*⁷ et un poète didactique. C'est dire si les aspects de sa réception dans l'Antiquité tardive sont changeants et brouillés, exactement comme l'est la poétique même du poète. Il y a ainsi, pour les lecteurs tardifs, plusieurs visages d'Ovide qui coexistent, ce qui conduit certes à la richesse de sa réception, qui est multiple, mais aussi, dans une certaine mesure, à l'éparpillement de son image.

⁶ Pour un cas intéressant dans la perspective de l'imitation et de l'adaptation d'Ovide à l'époque médiévale, voir Ratkowitsch 2012.

⁷ Sachant que, fonctionnellement, l'on ne saurait considérer les *Métamorphoses* comme une épopée en tant que telle. Voir Otis 1966.

Dès lors que l'on reconnaît une corrélation entre l'entrée dans une genericité précise et l'allégeance faite par un imitateur à un modèle (quitte à faire évoluer ensuite de l'intérieur les cadres poétiques), le statut générique complexe d'Ovide complique aussi sa réception. Or Ovide est-il un poète dont la réception dépasse les limites fixées aux genres littéraires ? La chose n'est pas évidente. Concrètement, un poète s'illustrant dans un genre différent de ceux qu'a cultivés Ovide trouve-t-il en lui plus qu'une référence à imiter ponctuellement, ou à la rigueur plus qu'une série d'expressions à reprendre dans le cadre d'un prolongement thématique – comme, par exemple, Prudence utilisant à plusieurs reprises les *Fastes* dans le *Contre Symmaque* car ce poème lui apporte beaucoup sur les habitudes de la Rome païenne dans le tableau noir qu'il brosse de la Rome des anciens temps ? Tel qu'il est lu à l'époque tardive, Ovide est-il un *poeta* qui, comme Virgile, accède aussi au statut de *uates*, de prophète dont les enseignements dépassent la sphère exclusivement poétique, dans une perspective notamment mythographique⁸ ? Là encore, une réponse globale et systématique paraît difficile au-delà du cas particulier de chaque imitateur tardif. Et, en eux-mêmes, les différents types de réception d'Ovide peuvent être très différents, même s'ils sont presque contemporains. Nous en évoquerons brièvement deux : Corippe et Maximien.

Dans la *Johannide* de Corippe, bien des expressions et bien des séquences reprises en même position métrique proviennent selon toute probabilité d'Ovide, et très majoritairement (quoique non exclusivement) de ses *Métamorphoses*, ce qui confirme bien que Corippe y voyait avant tout une œuvre épique, d'une envergure digne d'être imitée. Pour autant, il est fort possible que certains de ces souvenirs soient indirects, voire transmis par la tradition scolaire. Du reste, Ovide a, littérairement, une importance bien moindre pour Corippe que Lucain⁹ ou Claudien, et même que Silius Italicus¹⁰, que l'auteur de la *Johannide* semble tout particulièrement affectionner. D'une manière générale, il est imité

⁸ Voir Hays 2014.

⁹ Voir Vinchesi 1981.

¹⁰ Voir Delattre 2011.

ponctuellement et n'apporte pas beaucoup du point de vue de l'idéologie poétique et politique.

Il est certain, en revanche, que Maximien connaît personnellement très bien et utilise vraiment Ovide dans ses *Élégies*, au point même de donner l'impression d'entrer dans la tradition élégiaque pour la détourner et l'adapter à son projet original¹¹. L'exemple le plus caractéristique est sans doute l'élégie 5 qui, par le traitement du thème du fiasco amoureux, part d'Ovide (*am.* III. 7)¹² pour progressivement gagner en autonomie et présenter, sur ce sujet, un traitement rhétorique d'une grande originalité¹³. Après avoir évoqué le fiasco dont il a été victime, Maximien met dans la bouche de sa partenaire d'une nuit, la *Graia puella*, une *laudatio funebris* de sa *mentula* défaillante. Or le premier vers de ce passage burlesque (*el.* 5. 87 : *mentula festorum cultrix operosa dierum*) démarque Ov. *fast.* I. 101 (*uates operose dierum*) et III. 177 (*Latinorum uates operose dierum*) à la faveur d'un décalage de genre et de ton proprement jubilatoire. Ici, on peut parler sans hésitation d'une forme de détournement d'Ovide, ou 'Kontrastimitation', dans le cadre d'une réécriture du genre élégiaque. Au demeurant, comme l'a finement noté J. Meyers¹⁴, l'allusion particulièrement savoureuse ne peut être fortuite : le terme *cultrix* rappelle *uates* et *festorum dierum* fait songer au titre et au sujet même des *Fastes*, et ainsi, sous la plume de Maximien, le poète religieux du calendrier se voit transformé en verge, grande prêtresse de l'érotisme. Mais sans doute ce cas est-il assez exceptionnel et lié à une réception proprement générique : celle du plus grand poète élégiaque de l'époque augustéenne par un poète qui prétend revisiter l'élégie à la fin de l'Antiquité tardive.

C'est donc une image très contrastée que présente Ovide dans la littérature tardive et nous voudrions ici en prendre la mesure en étudiant sa présence dans un corpus d'autant plus intéressant ici qu'il n'a pas, en lui-même, une unité réelle : l'*Appendix Maximiani*.

¹¹ Voir notamment Consolino 1997 et Consolino 1999. Il manque une étude systématique de l'imitation d'Ovide chez Maximien. Voir cependant Dapunt 1949.

¹² Voir Mauger-Plichon 1999.

¹³ Voir Goldlust 2011.

¹⁴ Voir Meyers 1995.

Sous la périphrase particulièrement floue *Appendix Maximiani*, on désigne en fait un cycle de poèmes suivant immédiatement les *Élégies* de Maximien dans un manuscrit de la Bodleian Library d'Oxford, le Bodleianus 38, datant du XII^e siècle, dont H. W. Garrod fut le premier éditeur en 1910¹⁵. Dans son édition, le corpus comportait quatre poèmes : deux poèmes d'inspiration érotique composés en distiques élégiaques (les poèmes 1 et 2) et deux poèmes de circonstance, l'un en hexamètres dactyliques (poème 3), l'autre en distiques élégiaques (poème 4), tous les deux ancrés dans la tradition panégyrique et célébrant la construction d'une forteresse par le roi ostrogoth Théodat, neveu de Théodoric.

Un second pas décisif a été accompli lorsque W. Schetter¹⁶, à qui l'on doit l'appellation *Appendix Maximiani*, a montré qu'un autre manuscrit contient l'intégralité de ce corpus : le *Hafniensis Thott* 1064 (XV^e siècle) de la Bibliothèque Royale de Copenhague, dont l'examen permet de tirer plusieurs conclusions. Le manuscrit danois présente notamment une séparation très nette dans le cours du poème 4 qui avait été isolé par Garrod, séparation marquée typographiquement par une majuscule initiale dans la seconde partie : Schetter a ainsi distingué deux pièces (poèmes 4 et 5) dans ce que Garrod considérait comme une pièce unique (poème 4), la séparation se faisant à la fin du vers 22. Par ailleurs, le corpus s'est enrichi d'une sixième pièce suivant, dans le manuscrit danois, les cinq poèmes distingués par Schetter. De quatre poèmes (Garrod), l'*Appendix Maximiani* passait donc à six pièces (Schetter).

W. Schetter insista par ailleurs d'emblée sur la diversité thématique du recueil, qu'il pensait d'époque pré-carolingienne, et en avait déduit qu'il avait été composé par au moins deux auteurs différents, l'un ayant peut-être composé les poèmes 1-2, l'autre les poèmes 3-6. En outre, les poèmes 1, 2, 4 et 5 présenteraient, selon lui, une métrique bien trop fautive pour que l'on songe à les attribuer à Maximien. Tout au contraire, sur la base de rapprochements textuels intéressants avec les *Élégies* et grâce à la mise en lumière de *loci similes* (notamment entre, d'une part, *el.* 1. 89-100

¹⁵ Voir Garrod 1910.

¹⁶ Voir Schetter 1960.

et *el.* 5. 25-30 et, d'autre part, *app. Max.* 1), D. Romano¹⁷ considéra l'*Appendix Maximiani* comme une œuvre de jeunesse de Maximien, encore inaboutie dans la forme, à laquelle l'auteur ferait lui-même allusion lorsqu'il évoque, dans la première élégie, les 'doux mensonges des poètes' (*el.* 1. 11). D'un point de vue strictement théorique, Maximien aurait pu imiter, dans ses élégies, la première et la seconde partie du *carmen* 1 de l'*Appendix Maximiani*, œuvre d'un poète inconnu. Il aurait également pu imiter et améliorer, dans ses élégies, un poème de jeunesse (position de D. Romano). Mais, dans l'étude la plus fouillée publiée sur l'*Appendix Maximiani* et comprenant une nouvelle édition, A. Fo¹⁸ juge bien plus raisonnable d'envisager que Maximien, auteur des élégies, ait été imité par l'auteur inconnu du *carmen* 1 de l'*Appendix Maximiani*. Ainsi, Maximien ne serait pas l'imitateur mais le modèle. Des analyses postérieures conduisent le savant italien à tirer d'autres conclusions décisives qui n'ont pas, à ce jour, été remises en cause : les poèmes 3 et 4 seraient l'œuvre d'un même auteur et pourraient dater de la fin du règne de Théodat ; les poèmes 5 et 6, quoique d'inspiration différente, pourraient avoir été composés par ce même auteur ; aucun des poèmes de l'*Appendix* ne serait l'œuvre de Maximien et, comme le poème 1 (où Maximien est le modèle, et non l'imitateur), toutes les autres pièces pourraient également être postérieures aux *Élégies*.

Dans ce corpus composite ne présentant pas d'unité réelle, l'étude de la réception d'Ovide est intéressante pour plusieurs raisons. En premier lieu, on y trouve des pièces relevant de plusieurs traditions littéraires, érotique et panégyrique. De plus, tout porte à croire que ces *carmina* sont le fait non pas d'un seul auteur, mais de plusieurs. Il faut immédiatement préciser que leurs qualités poétiques, et leurs habitudes linguistiques ainsi que leur maîtrise de la métrique, sont fort variables d'un cas à l'autre. Sur ces bases, on peut même envisager que les poèmes de l'*Appendix Maximiani* remplissent des fonctions différentes. En étudiant le rapport de certaines pièces à la tradition littéraire et en constatant les profonds changements, d'un *carmen* à l'autre, dans la pratique de

¹⁷ Voir Romano 1970.

¹⁸ Voir Fo 1984-1985.

l'intertextualité, nous avons ainsi émis l'hypothèse que le *car-men* 5 pourrait être un exercice scolaire, influencé par la pratique du centon, alors que la pièce 6 exprime une sensibilité nettement plus personnelle¹⁹. Pour ces différentes raisons, le recueil de l'*Appendix Maximiani* – qui n'en est pas un ! – est sans doute une bonne pierre de touche pour appréhender la réception mouvante d'Ovide dans l'Antiquité tardive, à la fois dans un contexte probablement scolaire et dans un cadre de création poétique plus personnelle, mais aussi et surtout face à différents ancrages génériques.

Nous analyserons en premier lieu le cas des *erotika*. Le *car-men* 1²⁰, composé de dix distiques élégiaques, débute par l'éloge d'une *puella* qui n'est pas nommée. Mais cet assaut de compliments tourne court : face à l'intensité de l'amour éprouvé, le poète, qui se rêve en nouveau Pâris, se dit impuissant à exprimer ses sentiments. Suit alors un catalogue des beautés physiques de la *puella*, insistant sur ses cheveux d'or, ses cils caressants, son visage gracieux, son cou laiteux et ses seins délicats. L'auteur reprend alors Ovide (*am.* I. 5. 21-22), quoiqu'imparfaitement d'après les manuscrits, pour évoquer son ventre, ses hanches et sa cuisse, avant d'imaginer, en une pointe épigrammatique, la beauté de son intimité qu'il n'a encore jamais vue. Un problème de texte lié à l'imitation d'Ovide se présente aux vv. 17-18. Les manuscrits présentent le texte *quam castigatus plano sub pectore uenter*. Pour conserver la citation d'Ovide, *am.* I. 5. 21, A. Fo édite *quam castigato[s] planu<s> sub pectore uenter*. H. E. Stiene a approuvé – et nous le suivons – la correction d'A. Fo, en notant avec bon sens qu'une poitrine plate est peu susceptible de correspondre à un idéal de beauté féminine²¹, encore que l'on trouve chez Manil. II. 244 la séquence *plano sub pectore* (dans un contexte bien différent, à propos du scorpion allongé sur la terre). Nous ne suivons pas W. C. Schneider qui, quant à lui, reproduit la leçon des manuscrits. Puisque, pour des raisons de logique (liées à l'image de la beauté idéale) et d'imitation manifeste

¹⁹ Voir Goldlust 2012.

²⁰ Voir, sur ce poème comme pour les suivants, les pages de présentation que lui consacre Schneider 2003, pp. 133-145.

²¹ Voir Stiene 1986, pp. 184-192, ainsi que les notes de l'édition de Schneider 2003, p. 229.

d'Ovide, il nous semble préférable au v. 17 de corriger les manuscrits pour retrouver la lettre de l'hypotexte ovidien, nous sommes pour le v. 18 – là encore contre W. C. Schneider et avec H. E. Stiene –, favorable, par cohérence, à la correction *iuuenale femur* (provenant de Ov. *am.* I. 5. 22), plutôt qu'à la forme transmise *iuuenile femur* – sans modification de sens il est vrai.

Le *carmen* 2 présente un texte assez corrompu, surtout au début²². Il relève lui aussi d'une inspiration érotique et se compose de neuf distiques élégiaques. Il poétise l'amour de l'auteur pour sa *puella* et son attachement passionnel grâce à plusieurs comparaisons avec des amoureux mythiques. Retenu par les chaînes de Vénus, le poète n'hésite pas, à l'image de Léandre, à traverser les eaux glacées pour retrouver son aimée. Il est un nouvel Achille, enflammé pour Briséis, un nouveau Phébus, torturé par son amour pour Daphné qui le refuse. Le poème s'achève sur une image filée, reprise d'Ovide (*am.* II. 15. 16-17) : pour exprimer symboliquement les liens qui l'unissent à son aimée, le poète voudrait être un anneau d'or, qu'elle porterait à son doigt et qu'elle baiserait de ses lèvres au moment de l'utiliser en tant que sceau. De l'image des liens qui retiennent l'amoureux prisonnier à celle de l'anneau en tant que symbole de l'union, c'est donc l'attachement et la soumission à la *puella* qui donnent son unité à cette pièce.

D'une manière générale, la fin du *carmen* est une variation assez fidèle à partir d'Ovide, *am.* II. 15, élégie dans laquelle le poète s'adresse à l'anneau qui ceint le doigt de sa maîtresse, même si – selon W. C. Schneider – l'union du motif de l'anneau et des thèmes de l'enfermement comme de la soumission donne un nouvel accent à cette pièce.

On s'arrêtera un instant sur le v. 14 :

ut manibus teneris tu mea membra regas.

Dans la latinité tardive, le substantif *membra* est souvent presque l'équivalent de *corpus*. Mais ici, l'emploi de *membra* est peut-être, en contexte, un souvenir d'Ovide, *am.* II. 15. 25 (*sed, puto, te nuda mea membra libidine surgent*), puisque l'on constate que la fin de cette élégie est par ailleurs manifestement imitée dans le poème.

²² Plusieurs propositions de correction ont été faites sur la base d'Ovide. Voir Stiene 2003, pp. 188-189, qui présente un état de la question très clair.

Dans ce cas, l'expression prendrait un sens ouvertement érotique, sinon obscène, qui ne manquerait pas d'évoquer certains passages de la cinquième élégie de Maximien, notamment les vv. 57-58 et 83.

Que conclure de ces deux pièces érotiques ? Qu'Ovide, poète de l'amour et de la mythologie, y est manifestement imité et même, pour être plus précis, repris. Certes, l'univers de la Fable peut donner un relief certain à la description amoureuse et, d'une manière générale, l'*Appendix Maximiani* semble, par le truchement d'Ovide, accorder à la mythologie une place plus importante que ne le font les *Élégies* de Maximien, qui en restent aux éléments les plus basiques de la fable²³. Pour autant, face à des reprises reposant sur plusieurs citations mot à mot, il semble que l'emploi qui est fait ici d'Ovide conduit finalement à voir dans le poète augustéen une référence presque scolaire qui a servi de support. En greffant à l'identique des passages ovidiens dans leur production, les auteurs ou, probablement, l'auteur unique des deux *carmina* se place(nt) intégralement sous l'autorité d'Ovide, ne manifeste(nt) pas réellement d'ambition personnelle et ne donne(nt) pas l'impression d'aspirer à faire émerger une vision originale.

Venons-en, à présent, aux *epideiktica*, les *carmina* 3-6, qui relèvent de la description et de l'éloge, certes sous des modalités variées entre, d'une part, le diptyque 3-4 et, d'autre part, le cycle 5-6.

Les poèmes 3 et 4 forment un diptyque célébrant l'œuvre politique de Théodat. Le *carmen* 3, composé de vingt-trois hexamètres dactyliques, prend à témoin un voyageur découvrant de loin une haute montagne où, au bord de précipices et de falaises, a été édifié un palais, havre de paix préservant les hommes. C'est le roi Théodat, bâtisseur et pacificateur, qui a su dompter une nature hostile et soumettre la pierre sans livrer aucun combat. Le *carmen* 4, composé de onze distiques élégiaques, chante également une poésie de la pierre. Il y est encore question de la forteresse édifiée par Théodat pour mettre les hommes à l'abri des guerres et des périls, mais elle est à présent vue de près. Le roi avait découvert ces lieux austères et effrayants en longeant ses côtes.

²³ Voir Goldlust 2013, p. 32.

Seuls les oiseaux de mer s'intéressaient jusqu'alors à cet endroit aride qui ne peut rien produire. Mais Théodat y a vu le siège d'un édifice futur.

Les poèmes 5 et 6, quant à eux, ne sont pas des éloges politiques, contrairement aux deux pièces précédentes, mais partagent avec elles la veine, très cultivée dans l'Antiquité tardive, de la description d'édifices. Dans le *carmen* 5, composé de sept distiques élégiaques, il s'agit de l'*ekphrasis* d'un autre édifice, un palais privé qui transpose les charmes de la campagne dans un cadre urbain, mêle avec raffinement la nature et la culture et, parfois, reproduit même la nature grâce à l'art. Le *carmen* 6, composé de cinq distiques élégiaques, chante le parcours de l'eau qui, venue de la campagne où elle ne servait à rien, est à présent domestiquée pour approvisionner la ville et ainsi y reproduire une nouvelle nature, supérieure à la nature originelle.

Pour ce qui est des pratiques intertextuelles dans les *carmina* 3-6 en général, et de l'imitation d'Ovide en particulier, on constate de grandes divergences d'une pièce à l'autre, qui ne font que renforcer l'impression d'hétérogénéité du corpus. L'analyse du *carmen* 3 permet de mettre en évidence, dans les remplois textuels, un très fort arrière-plan épique (Virgile, Lucain, Stace, Silius Italicus, Valérius Flaccus, Claudien). Au-delà de ces souvenirs ponctuels, l'auteur anonyme a aussi très finement développé un passage du livre 8 de l'*Énéide* qui lui sert d'hypotexte dans le cadre d'une démarche ouvertement politique. L'expression *stat... domus* du v. 11 est ainsi un souvenir évident de Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 192 (*stat domus et scopuli ingentem traxere ruinam*). Mais si l'on se reporte au texte virgilien, on découvre que les vv. 190-192 ont vraisemblablement servi de programme poétique à l'auteur du *carmen* 3, qui en reprend, au fil de son poème, bien des termes et des séquences.

Iam primum *saxis* suspensam hanc *aspice rupem*,
disiectae procul ut *moles* desertaque *montis*
stat domus et *scopuli* ingentem traxere *ruinam*²⁴.

²⁴ Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 190-192 : 'Mais regarde d'abord ce pic suspendu parmi les pierres, vois ces masses au loin dispersées, tout ce quartier de la montagne encore aujourd'hui désert, l'immense éboulis des rochers entraînés', à propos de la caverne de Cacus.

Cependant, au-delà de la dimension formelle de cet essaimage, c'est le contexte original et l'intérêt de sa transposition dans un poème à finalité épидictique qui doivent être soulignés. Les vers de Virgile décrivent en l'occurrence le refuge abandonné qui servait de cachette au monstre Cacus. Énée est, en effet, invité par le roi Évandré à prendre part aux cérémonies et au banquet en l'honneur d'Hercule, grâce auquel les Arcadiens ont pu échapper à de nombreux périls²⁵ (ce qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'expression du *carmen* 3. 10 *per tot discrimina*). L'expression *stat domus* désignait chez Virgile le repaire abandonné du monstre ; dans l'*Appendix Maximiani*, à la faveur d'un retournement total des valeurs et d'un passage du négatif (l'isolement) au positif (la stabilité rassurante), elle devient une expression de la sécurité promise au peuple du roi. Mais surtout, en prenant en compte l'ensemble du passage virgilien au-delà de ces trois vers programmatiques, on comprend que le poète anonyme s'est livré dans le *carmen* 3 à une réécriture de la description de la caverne du monstre Cacus. Les vv. 230-250 évoquent Hercule constatant que Cacus lui a volé ses bœufs et se lançant dans la destruction de sa caverne pour tuer le monstre. C'est ainsi qu'il met les Arcadiens à l'abri du péril. De la même manière – et la proximité lexicale évidente des vv. 190-192 avec le *carmen* 3 justifie la transposition –, c'est aussi en domptant la pierre que Théodat est parvenu à fortifier le lieu et à mettre son peuple à l'abri des dangers environnants : le passage virgilien, caractérisé par la menace pesant sur le peuple Arcadien, est repris pour évoquer la paix. En prenant la mesure de l'importance conférée ici à l'hypotexte virgilien, qui se trouve retourné, et en se reportant au contexte original, le lecteur est ainsi invité à voir en Théodat un nouvel Hercule, vainqueur de la pierre pour mettre un terme au péril.

Si le poète spéculait ici avec beaucoup de finesse sur la tradition virgilienne, Ovide reste le grand absent de ce poème où tous les auteurs imités sont des poètes épiques (preuve manifeste d'un phénomène d'imitation par genre qui, dans le cas de cette pièce d'éloge politique, privilégie l'épopée). Est-ce à dire que le poète des *Métamorphoses* n'était pas considéré comme tel par l'auteur anonyme ? Il paraît difficile d'aller jusque-là, d'autant que

²⁵ Voir Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 188-189 : *saevis, hospes Troiane, periclis / servati facimus meritosque nouamus honores*.

l'élégiaque Ovide n'est pas davantage présent, contrairement à ce qui a cours dans les pièces 1 et 2 qui, de toute façon, font état d'un rapport beaucoup plus scolaire et presque servile à la tradition.

Dans le *carmen* 4, qui présente une intertextualité nettement moins cohérente que le *carmen* 3²⁶, le souvenir d'Ovide n'est sans doute pas absent, mais en tout cas extrêmement discret et probablement limité à un cas. L'expression *tutus eris* (v. 6) est une séquence d'inspiration élégiaque assez courante et notamment utilisée par Properce III. 3. 24 et Ovide, *ars* I. 752 et II. 58 ; *fast.* III. 432 ; *her.* 4. 145 ; *rem.* 144 et 650 et *trist.* I. 1. 38. Mais la récurrence de cette expression dans le corpus ovidien en fait pour ainsi dire une sorte de 'charnière', dont la portée ne saurait être considérée comme très significative. Il semble plus raisonnable d'y voir une allusion culturelle, ou même scolaire, à destination du public cultivé.

Il en va tout autrement dans le *carmen* 5. Une étude détaillée des pratiques d'intertextualité dans ce poème, citée plus haut, nous a permis de mettre en évidence, entre autres phénomènes intéressants, une réelle présence d'Ovide à l'arrière-plan²⁷. Nous en prendrons ici la mesure en commentant certaines citations, reprises et adaptations au fil du *carmen*.

Au v. 6, la séquence *toto quidquid in orbe placet* qui couvre la plus grande part du pentamètre est une reprise mot pour mot d'Ovide, *her.* 21, 150. La dernière pièce du recueil ovidien est une

²⁶ La recherche des sources que nous avons menée nous permet d'arriver aux résultats suivants, très minces et peu cohérents si on les compare aux sources du *carmen* 3 :

- *pelagi uolucres* (v. 3) est une reprise de Verg. *georg.* I. 383.
- *turbatis... aquis* (v. 4) est une reprise de Sil. x. 213.
- *horrida bella* (v. 5), expression peu significative relevant de la *koinè* épique, est utilisée par Verg. *Aen.* VI. 86 et VII. 41 ; Sil. I. 630 et XIII. 451-452 ; Stat. *silu.* III. 3. 170 ; Stat. *Theb.* IV. 601 ; VI. 457 ; VI. 864-865.
- *tutus eris* (v. 6) est une séquence d'inspiration élégiaque ; voir notamment Prop. III. 3. 24 ; Ov. *ars* I. 752 et II. 58 ; *fast.* III. 432 ; *her.* 4. 145 ; *rem.* 144 et 650 ; *trist.* I. 1. 38.
- l'énumération *saxa, lacus, rupes* (v. 7) est peut-être un très vague souvenir, et en tout cas non significatif, de Sil. XVI. 8 (*saxa ruit, sternit siluas rupesque lacessit*).
- la séquence *lustrans sua litora* (v. 9) est peut-être imitée de Verg. *Aen.* v. 611 et de Lucan. v. 416.

²⁷ Voir Goldlust 2012.

lettre de Cydippe à Acontios : Cydippe se répand en reproches contre Acontios qui, pour l'obliger à l'épouser, a offert à la jeune fille une pomme sur laquelle figurait un serment : 'je jure devant Artémis de n'épouser personne d'autre qu'Acontios'. La jeune fille exhorte Acontios à user avec d'autres femmes de ce genre de tromperies ; qu'il fasse en sorte aussi, s'il le veut, que les rois lui promettent de lui offrir leur royaume et qu'il devienne le possesseur de 'tout ce qui [lui] plaît dans l'univers'. Il semble qu'ici, l'auteur du *carmen* 5 cite ce passage sans le soumettre à une recontextualisation. Sans doute est-ce d'ailleurs la valeur très générale de la proposition qui permet, presque sous la forme d'une 'cheville', une transposition aisée du contexte élégiaque à ce court poème. Le remploi permet donc au poète de chercher des parrainages littéraires et, par citation interposée, rattache le *carmen* à une autre tradition.

Au v. 7, le poète utilise l'expression *uitreis... undis*. Celle-ci est, parmi bien d'autres occurrences au pluriel, attestée chez Ovide, *met.* v. 48 (à propos du lieu de naissance d'Athis) :

Erat Indus Athis, quem flumine Gange
edita Limnaee *uitreis* peperisse sub *undis*
creditur²⁸.

Pour autant, la fréquence de cette expression qui relève de la *koinè* poétique ne permet probablement pas d'accorder à l'occurrence ovidienne un rôle spécifique pour notre poète, qui voit sans doute en cette reprise un ornement embellissant sa composition.

Comme l'expression *uitreis... undis*, et avec le même genre de disjonction, l'expression *niger... lucus*, employée au vers 9 du *carmen* 5, a été plusieurs fois utilisée en poésie classique²⁹. On retiendra notamment deux occurrences dans les *Fastes* d'Ovide :

Ov. *fast.* II. 165-167 (à propos d'un bois sacré dans lequel pénètre Phébè et où se trouve un bassin) :

²⁸ Ov. *met.* v. 47-49 : 'Il y avait là un Indien, Athis, à qui Limnée, fille du Gange, avait, dit-on, donné le jour sous les eaux cristallines...'. Trad. G. Lafaye, CUF.

²⁹ Outre les passages des *Fastes* commentés, voir, plus haut, à propos du remploi de l'expression *torpentes lacus*, notre analyse de Sen. *Oed.* 530 : *Est procul ab urbe lucus ilicibus niger*. Voir également Stat. *Theb.* v. 152-153 : *lucus iuga celsa Mineruae propter / opacat humum niger ipse*.

Vt tetigit lucum (densa *niger* ilice *lucus*,
in medio *gelidae* fons erat altus aquae),
'Hic', ait, 'in silua, uirgo Tegeaea, lauemur'³⁰ !

Ov. *fast.* III. 295 (à propos d'un bois sacré au pied de l'Aventin) :

*Lucus Auentino suberat niger ilicis umbra*³¹ [...].

L'expression *patula... arbore* (v. 9), qui poétise une idée topique, ne semble pas si fréquente. On se rappellera cependant, avec exactement le même type de disjonction entre l'épithète et le substantif, Ovide, *met.* I. 106 (à propos des glands tombant de l'arbre de Jupiter pendant l'Âge d'or, époque d'un printemps éternel) :

et quae deciderant *patula* Iouis *arbore* glandes³².

Dans ces deux cas (vv. 7 et 9), l'imitation semble répondre à une fonction ornementale.

Au v. 12, la séquence *uernat auis* est une citation directement reprise d'Ov. *trist.* III, 12. 8 (après un hiver particulièrement rigoureux, les hommes, la nature et la faune célèbrent le retour du printemps) :

prataque pubescunt uariorum flore colorum,
*indocilique loquax gutture uernat auis*³³.

Dans sa reprise au sein du *carmen* 5, lors de l'évocation finale d'une nature charmante, cette citation présente une forme de continuité évidente.

³⁰ Ov. *fast.* II. 165-167 : 'Dès qu'elle atteignit le bois (c'était le bois sombre d'un fourré d'yeuses, au milieu duquel sourdait une source profonde d'eau fraîche), elle dit : "Baignons-nous ici, en forêt, vierge de Tégée"'. Trad. R. Schilling, CUF.

³¹ Ov. *fast.* III. 295 : 'Il y avait au pied de l'Aventin un bois sacré d'yeuses à l'ombre ténébreuse [...]'. Trad. R. Schilling, CUF. Ce vers est un cas manifeste d'auto-imitation.

³² Ov. *met.* I. 106 : 'et les glands tombés de l'arbre de Jupiter aux larges ramures'. Trad. G. Lafaye, CUF.

³³ Ov. *trist.* III. 12. 7-8 : 'Les prés se couvrent de fleurs aux mille couleurs et l'oiseau babillard, sans avoir appris, chante le printemps'. Trad. J. André, CUF.

Si l'on en juge par le nombre des souvenirs plus que probables d'Ovide dans le *carmen* 5, on ne peut que conclure sur l'importance de la présence du poète. Pour autant, on ne peut cacher une certaine forme de déception en constatant que c'est presque exclusivement à une fonction ornementale que ce poème cantonne l'imitation d'Ovide, alors même que certains tours du *carmen* proviennent probablement de passages épiques ou tragiques totalement détournés, retournés, voire pervertis pour être adaptés, comme si le poète anonyme s'était lancé un défi poétique – celui d'une *retractatio* systématique de l'inspiration poétique originelle. Or le lecteur ne découvre rien de tel s'agissant d'Ovide. Dans le *carmen* 4, Ovide n'est apparemment pas considéré comme un poète épique, mais simplement comme une référence digne d'être imitée et faisant généralement l'objet d'une reprise thématique, d'une sorte de continuité linéaire sans modification ni adaptation. Ce n'est malheureusement pas le *carmen* 6, dont Ovide semble absent, qui permet de nuancer cette appréciation.

Finalement, que conclure de cette analyse de la présence d'Ovide dans l'*Appendix Maximiani* ? Déjà que le souvenir du poète est très inégal dans ce corpus qui – nous le notions d'emblée – n'a aucune unité. Il n'en est que plus significatif de constater que, malgré cette absence d'unité, ce n'est pas – quelles que soient les pièces considérées – en tant que poète épique qu'Ovide est reçu. Le poète est reçu prioritairement dans une perspective ornementale, et non auctoriale, sauf dans le cas des *carmina* 1 et 2, qui reprennent ouvertement le poète élégiaque. La richesse générique de l'œuvre d'Ovide a certes sans doute compliqué sa réception tardive, à plus forte raison pour des poètes (ou des apprentis poètes) restant encore très proches des pratiques scolaires. Pour autant, Ovide est généralement repris et non recontextualisé ou adapté à un projet littéraire original, comme le sont en revanche Virgile et plusieurs autres poètes épiques dans l'*Appendix Maximiani*. Mais il est plus que probable que la faute en revienne aux poètes anonymes, parfois encore trop dépendants de la tradition scolaire ou de la pratique du centon, plus qu'à Ovide lui-même.

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Résumé

Après une introduction théorique sur la réception d'Ovide dans l'Antiquité tardive, mettant en exergue l'importance de la notion de genre littéraire dans cette réception et soulignant ses différents statuts sur la base de deux exemples (Corippe et Maximien), nous étudions le cas de l'*Appendix Maximiani*, une collection n'ayant en réalité aucune unité qui offre, pour cette raison, une bonne illustration des multiples images d'Ovide à cette époque. Ensuite, nous analysons la présence du poète dans les *erotika* (*App. Max.* 1-2) et dans les *epideiktika* (*App. Max.* 3-6), en prenant en compte des problèmes philologiques et les méthodes d'imitation.

Abstract

After a theoretical introduction about Ovid's reception in Late Antiquity, stressing the importance of the notion of literary genre in this reception and focusing on its multiple statuses thanks to two examples (Corippus and Maximianus), we study the case of the *Appendix Maximiani*, a collection which has actually no unity and is, for that reason, a good example of the numerous images of Ovid at that time. Then, we analyse the poet's presence in the *erotika* (*App. Max.* 1-2) and in the *epideiktika* (*App. Max.* 3-6), taking into account philological problems and imitation methods.

*CAELO TERRAEQUE PEROSUS
INTER UTRUMQUE PERIT:*

UN'ECO OVIDIANA NELLA DESCRIZIONE
DELLA MORTE DI GIUDA IN ARATORE

Aratore, poeta della prima metà del VI secolo, è noto per aver composto una parafrasi biblica¹ degli Atti degli Apostoli che prende il nome di *Historia apostolica* o *De actibus apostolorum*.²

Le notizie sulla vita dell'autore sono scarse; sappiamo però che egli è originario dell'Italia settentrionale e a Milano frequenta la scuola di Deuterio grazie alla protezione del vescovo Lorenzo e di Ennodio.³ Trasferitosi poi a Ravenna, condivide qui con un giovane più anziano di lui, di nome Partenio, un ulteriore periodo di formazione: sono anni intensi, in cui Aratore ascolta dall'amico e studia per proprio conto sia autori cristiani (nell'epistola a Partenio, indirizzatagli anni dopo da Aratore, vengono nominati Ambrogio, forse Draconzio⁴ e Sidonio Apollinare) sia pagani, tra cui Cesare⁵ e coloro che definisce *poetas / in quibus ars*

¹ Sul concetto di 'parafrasi biblica' cf. Deproost 1997, Consolino 2005, Nazzaro 2006 e Nazzaro 2008.

² Per quanto concerne il titolo cf. Schwind 1990, p. 9 n. 1 e Deproost 1990, p. 29 n. 35 con relativa bibliografia.

³ A proposito del ruolo di Ennodio come maestro di molti giovani aristocratici cf. Riché 1995, p. 26; sul suo rapporto specifico con Aratore cf. Manitius 1911, pp. 162-164.

⁴ *Decentius*, che compare nei manoscritti, è parola sicuramente guasta: Arntzen 1769 propone di emendarla in *Licentius*, Deproost 1990, p. 272 propende per *Dracontius* (cf. anche Romano 1959, p. 85), Manitius 1911 intende *Sedulius*, Mastandrea 2004, p. 337 propone *Prudentius*.

⁵ La citazione dei *Commentarii* cesariani si spiegherebbe secondo Bureau 1998, p. 394 con la volontà di Aratore di rendere omaggio alla famiglia di Partenio: il cugino di quest'ultimo, infatti, Flavio Licerio Firmino Lupicino, realizzò un'edizione di Cesare di cui una parte della tradizione manoscritta reca le tracce.

fallax, pompa superba fuit.⁶ Dobbiamo immaginarci che con questa espressione egli intenda i grandi autori classici che fanno parte del canone scolastico, in cui un ruolo di primo piano hanno Virgilio, Lucano, Stazio, Orazio, Seneca tragico, Terenzio e, naturalmente, Ovidio.⁷ Tanto grande è la passione per le loro opere che il proposito del giovane inizialmente è quello di dedicarsi alla stesura di scritti di contenuto mondano: è Partenio stesso – se prestiamo fede alla lettera in distici elegiaci, pur ricca di temi topici⁸ – a convincerlo a dedicarsi alla composizione di poemi in grado di esaltare Dio.

In seguito, sotto Teodorico prima e Atalarico poi, Aratore riveste importanti cariche pubbliche per una decina d'anni; per motivi che ancora ci sfuggono lo troviamo improvvisamente a Roma in qualità di suddiacono a declamare con grande successo la sua opera, dedicata a papa Vigilio, nella chiesa di San Pietro in Vincoli nella primavera del 544. Nessun altro dato ci permette di ipotizzare con ragionevole certezza la data della morte.

La morte di Giuda raccontata da Pietro

All'inizio dell'*Historia apostolica* Pietro, protagonista indiscusso del primo libro dell'opera aratoriana, ricorda la fine di Giuda ed esorta gli apostoli a sceglierne il successore (vv. 83-104):⁹

⁶ Arator *ad Parth.* 41-42.

⁷ Per una definizione del canone scolastico in epoca altomedievale, punto di arrivo della tradizione tardoantica, opera di riferimento è ancora Munk Olsen 1991.

⁸ Mastandrea 2004, p. 332 ricorda come in questa epistola dal sapore parenetico si intravedano, accanto a elementi stereotipati, echi di letture importanti, che Aratore sfrutta abilmente per esaltare la figura dell'amico: sono citati per esempio Ovidio, Lucano e Claudiano.

⁹ Il testo è citato secondo l'edizione Orbán 2006. Ritengo opportuno fornire la mia traduzione del passo: 'Voi sapete che un folle traditore ha pagato per sé il conto del suo crimine; ha provato lui stesso orrore di fronte al disgusto per la propria colpa, strangolando nella sua gola una voce colpevole senza precedenti. Egli ha meritato di morire in quella parte del corpo attraverso la quale ha peccato e, riconoscendo il suo crimine, attraverso una valutazione di tal genere ha consegnato le sue membra a una tale follia, di modo che la punizione dovuta a un nemico comune <a cielo e terra> gli ha assegnato un luogo a metà dell'aria; odioso alla terra e al cielo, egli è morto tra l'una e l'altro. Le sue viscere, da non deporle in alcuna tomba, cadono a terra a pezzi e la sua polvere fugge lontano dal mondo, sollevata nell'aria leggera. Non è priva di senso questa punizione

Nostis quia proditor amens
 mercedem sceleris soluit sibi; taedia noxae
 horruit ipse suae stringens in gutture uocem 85
 exemplo cessante ream. Qui parte necari
 promeruit qua culpa fuit crimenque retractans
 iudicio tali permisit membra furori,
 aeris ut medio communi poneret hosti
 debita poena locum; caelo terraeque perosus 90
 inter utrumque perit. Nullis condenda sepulcris
 uiscera rupta cadunt tenuesque elapsus in auras
 fugit ab orbe cinis. Non haec uacat ultio Iudae,
 quae suprema negat uindictaque mercis iniquae
 sic placitura uenit. Nam, cum modo rura parasset 95
 funeris ex pretio, cum nomine Sanguinis emptus
 cespes in externas componens busta fauillas
 de tumulis fecundet humum, caret impius agri
 fertilitate sui solusque excluditur aruis,
 quae monumenta ferunt, cuius tuba saeua cruentum 100
 est exorsa nefas, qui signifer oscula fingens
 pacis ab indicio bellum lupo intulit agno.
 Nunc opus est uotis quod uerba prophetica clamant,
 quem liceat supplere uices.

La descrizione abbastanza sintetica del Nuovo Testamento è notevolmente ampliata dal poeta, il quale dilata la morte di Giuda, dipinto come il traditore che va incontro a una punizione più che meritata, al contrario di quanto si legge in Act. 1. 16, in cui l'apostolo è considerato uno strumento necessario all'adempimento delle Scritture.¹⁰

di Giuda, la quale gli nega gli ultimi onori, e il castigo per l'ingiusto guadagno giunge così a piacerci. Infatti, dopo aver appena comprato un campo con i soldi ricevuti per la morte <di Cristo> – mentre la terra, comprata con il nome del Sangue, radunando sepolcri tra ceneri straniere, rende fecondo il suolo a partire dalle tombe – l'empio è privato della fertilità del proprio terreno e, solo, è escluso dai campi pieni di tombe, lui la cui perfida voce diede inizio a un cruento peccato, lui che, facendo un segnale, fingendo un bacio, come un lupo ha portato, a partire da un segno di pace, la guerra a un agnello. Ora c'è bisogno di preghiere per chiedere chi possa prendere il suo posto, cosa che annunciano le parole profetiche'.

¹⁰ Act. 1. 16-20: *Viri fratres, oportebat impleri Scripturam, quam praedixit Spiritus Sanctus per os David de Iuda, qui fuit dux eorum, qui comprehenderunt Iesum, quia connumeratus erat in nobis et sortitus est sortem ministerii huius. Hic quidem possedit agrum de mercede iniquitatis; et pronus factus crepuit medius, et diffusa sunt omnia uiscera eius. Et notum factum est omnibus habitantibus Ierusalem, ita*

In realtà il racconto di questo evento per bocca di Pietro è il risultato della fusione in un unico brano di due tradizioni diverse, quella degli Atti degli Apostoli e quella di Matth. 27. 3-10.¹¹ Come giustamente afferma Deproost, Aratore ha conservato di Giuda le caratteristiche peggiori riscontrabili in ciascuno di questi due passi e le ha amplificate facendo ricorso agli strumenti della retorica.¹² Il poeta infatti passa sotto silenzio che egli facesse parte del gruppo degli apostoli e fosse strumento necessario perché le Scritture potessero compiersi; inoltre sceglie di proposito la versione degli Atti, secondo la quale sarebbe stato Giuda in persona ad acquistare il campo dove poi si sarebbe suicidato, per sottolineare così la sua autonomia decisionale, mentre nel Vangelo di Matteo sono i sacerdoti a comprare il terreno. Anche il nome del campo viene interpretato nel modo più sfavorevole a Giuda: esso, infatti, viene acquistato a prezzo del sangue di Gesù e per questo è denominato *ager Sanguinis*, mentre secondo gli Atti questo toponimo è successivo e legato al suicidio dell'apostolo stesso. Infine, anche il fatto che Aratore abbia deciso di sottolineare il rimorso del discepolo che ha tradito il Maestro contribuisce a rendere Giuda pienamente consapevole delle proprie nefande azioni e perciò totalmente da condannare.

Accanto a questa dimensione individuale Châtillon e Deproost ne mettono in evidenza una storica: Giuda, da questo punto di vista, incarna 'toute la communauté criminelle des juifs, dont il est comme l'archétype'.¹³ L'assimilazione, già riscontrabile

ut appellaretur ager ille lingua eorum Aceldamach, hoc est ager Sanguinis. Scriptum est enim in libro Psalmorum: 'Fiat commoratio eius deserta, et non sit qui inhabitet in ea' et: 'Episcopatum eius accipiat alter'.

¹¹ Matth. 27. 3-10: *Tunc uidens Iudas, qui eum tradidit, quod damnatus esset, paenitentia ductus, rettulit triginta argenteos principibus sacerdotum et senioribus dicens: 'Peccaui tradens sanguinem innocentem'. At illi dixerunt: 'Quid ad nos? Tu uideris!'. Et proiectis argenteis in templo, recessit et abiens laqueo se suspendit. Principes autem sacerdotum, acceptis argenteis, dixerunt: 'Non licet mittere eos in corbonam, quia pretium sanguinis est'. Consilio autem inito, emerunt ex illis agrum Figuli in sepulturam peregrinorum. Propter hoc uocatus est ager ille ager Sanguinis usque in hodiernum diem. Tunc impletum est quod dictum est per Ieremiam prophetam dicentem: 'Et acceperunt triginta argenteos, pretium appetiati quem appetiauerunt a filiis Israel, et dederunt eos in agrum Figuli, sicut constituit mihi Dominus'.*

¹² Cf. Deproost 1989, p. 140. Di *amplificatio* parla anche a tal proposito Schwind 1990, p. 66.

¹³ Deproost 1989, p. 137.

in Sedulio,¹⁴ è possibile poiché – come sostiene Châtillon¹⁵ – per un gran numero di cristiani del VI secolo la parola *Iudaeus* acquista il suo vero senso proprio a partire da Giuda, quasi che gli Ebrei fossero per natura dei traditori. Questa associazione di idee è confermata, in un certo senso, anche dall'espressione *mercedem sceleris* del v. 84, che ricorda da vicino il sintagma *de mercede iniquitatis* di Act. 1. 18 e naturalmente il primo verso dell'*Historia apostolica*, con il sostantivo *scelus* accostato e riferito alla Giudea.¹⁶ Il poeta afferma insomma che il crimine compiuto dagli Ebrei nel loro complesso e quello di Giuda non sono altro che una cosa sola.

Aratore mostra di aver curato particolarmente questi versi, introducendo immagini che evocano due dei suoi maggiori ispiratori appartenenti alla letteratura classica:¹⁷ Ovidio, per ciò che concerne la sfida alla divinità e l'immagine del corpo sospeso tra terra e cielo, e Lucano per quanto riguarda l'orrore del tradimento e della morte di Giuda. Del *Bellum ciuile* lucaneo come ipotesto di cui Aratore può essersi servito per la descrizione della fine dell'apostolo mi sono occupato in un contributo a proposito della presenza di Lucano nell'*Historia apostolica*;¹⁸ è mia intenzione ora esaminare il ruolo dell'autore delle *Metamorfosi*, approfondendo le considerazioni di Deproost sul mito di Dedalo e Icaro che possiamo qui leggere in filigrana.¹⁹

¹⁴ Sedul. *carm. pasch.* v. 113-119: *Iamque dies aderat, nocturna maestior umbra, / flagitium uisura nouum, tenebrisque remotis / pandebat populis Iudaeae crimina gentis. / Mox igitur Dominum Pilati ad moenia duci / nexibus astrictum Iudas ut uidit iniquus, / deriguit scelerisque sui commercia reddens / incassum, facti pretium, non facta reliquit.* Il testo è citato secondo l'edizione di Huemer 1885. Deproost 1989, p. 140, n. 14 sottolinea che la vicinanza dei *crimina gentis Iudaeae* al v. 15 e di *Iudas* al v. 17 invita a un'assimilazione etimologica tra i due nomi che, per di più, si trovano nella stessa posizione a metà dell'esametro.

¹⁵ Cf. Châtillon 1968, p. 10.

¹⁶ Arator *act.* I. 1-7: *Vt sceleris Iudaea sui polluta cruore, / ausa nefas, compleuit opus rerumque Creator / hoc quod ab humanis sumpsit sine semine membris / humana pro stirpe dedit, dignatus ut ima / tangeret inferni, non linquens ardua caeli, / soluit ab aeterna damnatas nocte tenebras / ad Manes ingressa dies.*

¹⁷ Deproost 1989, p. 140 descrive il brano come frutto di una fusione di due passi molto noti anche in ambiente cristiano, la caduta di Icaro delle *Metamorfosi* e l'episodio di negromanzia del VI libro di Lucano. Per i parallelismi con Ovidio cf. pp. 140-143, per il rapporto con Lucano cf. pp. 143-145.

¹⁸ Mori 2016.

¹⁹ Lo stesso tema è trattato da Ovidio anche in *ars* II. 15-98: in questo caso il tono è decisamente elegiaco.

Dedalo, *Creten longumque perosus / exilium* (*met.* VIII. 183²⁰), vuole andarsene: per questo motivo escogita il ben noto stratagemma che consentirà a lui e al figlio Icaro di abbandonare la terra di Minosse, il quale *terras licet et undas / obstruat* (*met.* VIII. 185-186), tuttavia non può bloccare la strada attraverso il cielo poiché *non possidet aera* (*met.* VIII. 187). Il sintagma *aeris... medio* del v. 89 e il secondo emistichio del v. 90 di Aratore (*caelo terraeque perosus*) di fatto condensano in breve spazio le parole chiave dei primi cinque esametri del passo delle *Metamorfosi*. Con una differenza: il participio *perosus* nell'*Historia apostolica* è passivo, mentre in Ovidio ha sempre valore attivo in tutte le attestazioni.

Dedalo pensa che il cielo possa essere portatore di salvezza: per suo figlio Icaro esso rappresenterà al contrario il luogo della morte. La colpa del ragazzo è un evidente peccato di *hybris*: egli viene certamente punito per aver osato avvicinarsi troppo al sole, ma soprattutto per aver trasgredito, traendone godimento (*met.* VIII. 223 *audaci coepit gaudere uolatu*), le norme della natura, che proibiscono agli esseri umani di lasciare il suolo e volare.²¹ La punizione è automatica, esattamente come una *debita poena* (v. 90) spetta a Giuda, reo di aver tradito consapevolmente Gesù e dunque di aver rinnegato il messaggio che questi incarnava dopo averne sperimentato la bontà: agli occhi di Aratore percorrere la strada della salvezza per poi allontanarsene è senza dubbio uno stravolgimento del corso naturale degli eventi.

Per tale motivo Giuda è costretto a rimanere sospeso tra il campo e il cielo: la terra non lo vuole, il cielo lo rinnega, l'intera natura sembra insomma allontanarsi dal suo corpo impiccato che *inter utrumque perit* (v. 91). Il saggio consiglio di Dedalo (*met.* VIII. 206 *inter utrumque uola*) di stare equidistante dall'acqua del mare, che avrebbe appesantito le penne di Icaro, e dal calore del sole, che avrebbe sciolto la cera che le teneva assieme, diventa qui con sapiente manipolazione da parte di Aratore qual-

²⁰ Le *Metamorfosi* vengono citate sulla base del testo di Anderson 1977.

²¹ Dedalo in persona ne è pienamente consapevole, come si legge in *ars* II. 38-42: *Da ueniam coepto, Iuppiter alte, meo! / Non ego sidereas affecto tangere sedes: / qua fugiam dominum, nulla, nisi ista, uia est. / Per Styga detur iter, Stygias tranabimus undas: / sunt mihi naturae iura nouanda meae*. L'edizione di riferimento è Ramírez de Verger 2003.

cosa di completamente diverso: siamo di fronte allo stesso sintagma incipitario di verso, ma il senso è ribaltato. Giuda, infatti, vola, per così dire, tra cielo e terra perché è appeso a un albero: è chiaro che il testo di partenza, se vogliamo cogliere l'allusione, deve essere il brano di Matteo, perché gli Atti non parlano esplicitamente di impiccagione, ma riferiscono solamente che *pronus factus crepuit medius, et diffusa sunt omnia uiscera eius*.²²

L'immagine delle viscere dell'apostolo che si squarciano (v. 92 *uiscera rupta cadunt*) è un chiaro rimando biblico: ancora una volta Aratore sembra basarsi sulla versione di Matteo – non si giustificerebbe altrimenti il verbo *cadere*, se non pensassimo a un corpo sospeso – sulla quale però si innesta la descrizione che della morte dell'apostolo fa Pietro negli Atti. Ciò non toglie che all'interno di questa felice fusione di tradizioni evangeliche si possano rintracciare degli echi provenienti da Ovidio, compreso qualche tenue riferimento lessicale, come il sostantivo *auras* in sesto piede sia al v. 92 sia in *met.* VIII. 228: Icaro cade poiché non ha più presa sull'aria (*non ullas percipit auras*), quest'ultima disperde le parti ormai disintegrate – polvere o cenere – del corpo di Giuda (vv. 92-93 *tenuesque elapsus in auras / fugit ab orbe cinis*).

Per l'apostolo traditore non ci sarà dunque bisogno di alcun sepolcro (vv. 91-92 *nullis condenda sepulcris / uiscera*) né la terra è disposta ad accoglierlo, mentre Icaro riposerà alla fine in una tomba preparatagli dal padre (*met.* VIII. 234-235 *corpusque sepulcro / condidit*): in entrambi i casi, tuttavia, i poeti sottolineano che è dall'evento descritto che ha origine il nome del luogo in questione, con un intento eziologico che li accomuna. In *met.* VIII. 235 l'episodio di Icaro si conclude proprio con le parole *tellus a nomine dicta sepulti*, in Aratore il terreno è definito, sulla scorta del dettato evangelico, *cum nomine Sanguinis emptus/ cespes* (vv. 96-97). Per contrappasso Giuda, morto in un terreno destinato ad essere utilizzato come sepoltura per gli stranieri, ne è privo: il suo corpo non contribuirà a renderlo fertile.

C'è poi un'altra immagine comune ai due passi analizzati, vale a dire l'ultimo bacio: Dedalo *dedit oscula nato/ non iterum repetenda suo* (*met.* VIII. 211) per rassicurarlo e infondergli coraggio;

²² Act. 1. 18. Per il brano completo degli Atti cf. n. 3.

Giuda, al contrario, *signifer oscula fingens*²³ (v. 101), con questo apparente segno di affetto permette l'identificazione di Gesù e il suo arresto. Per entrambi si tratta dell'ultima volta in cui possono compiere un gesto del genere, anche se nessuno dei due – e Dedalo in particolar modo – ne è consapevole: sta al lettore, che conosce sicuramente tanto l'esito della narrazione mitica quanto il racconto neotestamentario, comprendere che cosa si nasconde dietro il sintagma *non iterum repetenda* e la rappresentazione del bacio di Giuda.

È infine probabile che la memoria di Ovidio abbia giocato un ruolo rilevante nella composizione di questo passo anche dal punto di vista puramente formale, oserei dire fonico, fosse pure a livello inconscio: basti pensare alle scelte lessicali dei vv. 90 e seguenti di Aratore, che hanno tutte un possibile riscontro nell'autore delle *Metamorfosi* (*debita poena* e *perosus* al v. 90, *inter utrumque* al v. 91, *uiscera rupta* al v. 92, *fugit ab orbe* al v. 93,²⁴

²³ Si tratta del problema testuale più significativo dell'intero brano. Arntzen 1769, McKinlay 1951 e Orbán 2006 pubblicano la lezione *oscula fingens*, nonostante la tradizione manoscritta presenti anche la più comune variante *oscula figens*. Deproost 1989, p. 143, sulla base del parallelo con Lucan. vi. 564 e di quello con *act.* ii. 412 (*oscula figat*), propende per l'ipotesi *oscula fingens*, che tra l'altro corrisponderebbe al racconto di Matth. 26. 48 e Marc. 14. 45. Così facendo, egli si colloca sulla stessa linea di Châtillon 1989, p. 16, il quale afferma che McKinlay 1951 ha preferito *oscula fingens* pur contro tutto un gruppo di manoscritti. Il problema dal punto di vista del significato è chiaro: il bacio verrebbe dato realmente se leggessimo *oscula fingens*, mentre sarebbe solo accennato, quasi una sorta di messinscena, se si accettasse *fingens*: in quest'ultimo caso, Giuda apparirebbe ancora più perfido e si caricherebbe negativamente un episodio già dipinto a tinte volutamente più cupe di quanto non facciano le Scritture. Anche se Vangeli e passi paralleli (per esempio Lucr. iv. 1171; Verg. *Aen.* ii. 490; Ov. *met.* iv. 141) ci spingono ad accettare la lezione più comune, tuttavia – afferma Châtillon – *oscula fingens* non va rigettato come un errore grossolano, *in primis* perché in Luc. 22. 47-48 non si afferma che il bacio viene realmente dato; in secondo luogo perché il passo parallelo di Lucano cui si fa generalmente riferimento come possibile antecedente, cioè il già menzionato Lucan. vi. 564, non ha una tradizione manoscritta univoca e, accanto a *figens*, presenta anch'esso la variante *fingens*, che di per sé non sarebbe inammissibile nel contesto lucaneo.

²⁴ La tradizione manoscritta di Aratore non è univoca da questo punto di vista: al v. 93, infatti, invece di *fugit ab orbe cinis*, Arntzen 1769 presenta la lezione *ore*, riportata da numerosi manoscritti. McKinlay 1951 ha scelto *orbe*, nonostante numerosi codici riportino *ore*, e per questo motivo viene criticato da Châtillon 1963, p. 15; cf. anche Deproost 1989, p. 141, che spiega a quali tradizioni poetiche si fa riferimento scegliendo l'una o l'altra variante. Orbán 2006 segue la scelta di McKinlay 1951.

suprema negat al v. 94, *nomine Sanguinis* al v. 96, *nunc opus est* al v. 103).²⁵ È pur vero che questi sintagmi si trovano anche in altri poeti precedenti, ma il fatto che siano tutti presenti pure in Ovidio ci spinge a chiederci se Aratore non avesse in mente – o nell'orecchio? – più il poeta delle *Metamorfosi* che altri scrittori: abbiamo ricordato fin da subito, infatti, che Ovidio è autore scolastico per eccellenza e perciò chi si apprestava a comporre poesia dattilica ne era indubbiamente influenzato, soprattutto nelle parti descrittive e narrative, come si può constatare anche a partire da questo episodio.

Conclusioni

L'analisi del passo mostra – spero – che anche quando, come in questo caso, non si può parlare di chiara allusività o di un intento palmare di *Kontrastimitation*, di cui gli autori dell'epos biblico sono veri e propri maestri,²⁶ l'influenza dei poeti studiati negli anni della gioventù da chi poi si è dedicato al componimento di opere letterarie non può essere ridotta a mero serbatoio di parole, sintagmi o clausole da riutilizzare a proprio piacimento come se fossero semplici mattoni utili per qualsiasi tipo di costruzione. L'aspetto fonico è certamente importante e presente, tuttavia forte è l'impressione che l'ipotesto di partenza non fosse solamente una cava di materiale linguistico da usare una volta che que-

²⁵ Ecco le attestazioni: v. 90 *debita poena* cf. Ov. *met.* vi. 538; Ov. *fast.* v. 648; Ov. *trist.* ii. 516; Orient. *comm.* ii. 194; Prosp. *epigr.* 5. 6; *epigr.* 80. 2; *perosus* Ov. *met.* ii. 379; viii. 183; *fast.* iii. 577; *trist.* i. 7. 21; Lucan. i. 438; viii. 336; ix. 860; Stat. *silv.* ii. 1. 144; Claud. *Manl. Theod.* 80; *Get.* 371; *Hon. VI cons.* 150; v. 91 *inter utrumque* a inizio verso si trova in poesia 16 volte prima di Aratore, di cui sei in Ovidio (*met.* ii. 140; viii. 13; viii. 206; *trist.* i. 2. 25; *ars* ii. 63; *hal.* 85), quattro in opere a carattere astronomico, due in Commodiano, due in Claudiano, una in Sidonio e una in Avito. Per quanto concerne v. 92 *viscera rupta* cf. Ov. *her.* 4. 126 (nella lettera indirizzata a Ippolito da Fedra, la quale dichiara che avrebbe preferito morire durante il parto), ma anche Lucan. vi. 723. E ancora: v. 93 *fugit ab orbe* cf. *fugit ab ore* Ov. *trist.* ii. 30, ma anche l'espressione *sol fugit ab orbe* di Ps. Prosp. *carm. de prov.* 527, in cui si descrivono gli eventi concomitanti alla morte di Gesù; per v. 94 *suprema negat* cf. Ov. *met.* vii. 376 *suprema negabat; nomine Sanguinis* cf. *ad senat.* 20 e Ov. *met.* ix. 466 *nomina sanguinis*.

²⁶ Sul concetto di allusività risultano ancora illuminanti i contributi di Pasquali 1968 e Conte – Barchiesi 1989; la questione della 'Kontrastimitation' è stata invece studiata da Thraede 1962, Herzog 1975 e Stella 2006: alla loro definizione mi attengo.

sto fosse stato richiamato inconsciamente alla memoria a partire dal serbatoio delle opere imparate a scuola, ma che l'associazione che stimolava il poeta tardoantico a 'servirsi' di un testo precedente partisse prima di tutto dalle immagini, dai concetti, dalle suggestioni espresse con quel materiale linguistico. L'analogia poteva scattare per diverse ragioni e sulla base di differenti elementi, soprattutto somiglianze di situazioni, personaggi, luoghi: a quel punto, una volta innescato il meccanismo, si attivavano delle 'reminiscenze a grappolo', a volte veramente inconsapevoli, per cui il passo di partenza veniva per così dire saccheggiato e alcune espressioni in esso contenute rievocate di tanto in tanto, anche a centinaia di versi di distanza.

D'altra parte, l'affinità dell'opera di Aratore con le *Metamorfosi* ovidiane è evidente anche in virtù della struttura stessa dell'*Historia apostolica*, che segue il dettato degli Atti ed è pertanto concepita a quadri semi-indipendenti piuttosto che basata su lunghi episodi narrativi tra loro strettamente connessi, come accade in un poema epico standard. Non è un caso che ben presto i due libri di Aratore siano stati ulteriormente ripartiti in quaranta-quattro sezioni di lunghezza variabile precedute da brevi riassunti in prosa che sintetizzano il contenuto narrativo dei versi.²⁷

Inoltre, anche per Aratore, possono valere, sia pure in misura minore e con le dovute differenze, alcune considerazioni che van der Laan fa a proposito di Sedulio:²⁸ in Aratore, come nell'autore del *Carmen Paschale*, spesso il trapasso da una scena a quella successiva, da un quadro narrativo alla cornice descrittiva dell'episodio che segue, è segnalato da avverbi quali *subito*, *extemplo*, *interea*, che indicano lo scarto da un momento all'altro, da un luogo a un altro; anche nell'*Historia apostolica*, poi, il ritmo dell'esametro è più ovidiano che virgiliano, con la preferenza per la successione dattilo-spondeo-dattilo-spondeo nei primi quattro piedi, seguita da DDSD, DDDS e DDSS (mentre Virgilio predilige un dattilo seguito da tre spondei);²⁹ la poesia tardoantica, infine, tende

²⁷ Sui *tituli* e la loro tradizione manoscritta cf. McKinlay 1932 e Schwind 1990, pp. 32-36.

²⁸ Cf. van der Laan 1993, p. 145.

²⁹ Per quanto concerne le pause e il ritmo del verso cf. Martorelli p. 129: 'La sequenza di brevi unità di senso metricamente marcate dona una regolare speditezza al dettato poetico, esemplato sotto questo aspetto al modello di ascendenza ovidiana; la propensione ad iniziare una nuova fase narrativa dopo

a essere a volte barocca, ossessionata com'è per il dettaglio minuto e abilmente descritto, ed è perciò in alcune sue modalità espressive più affine a Ovidio che non al grande modello virgiliano.

Si dimostra perciò condivisibile la conclusione cui giunge Deproost, secondo il quale Aratore, quando parafrasa un avvenimento che si presta all'estremizzazione dei toni e al patetismo, si affida volentieri al linguaggio manierista di Ovidio o Lucano:³⁰

au goût subtil de l'un pour l'anedoctisme pictural il a uni la complaisance de l'autre dans la description baroque du sordide et de l'immonde. [...] Connoté par des tel souvenirs, l'acte de Judas paraît encore plus odieux que ne le laissaient percevoir les écrivains sacrés.

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l'effemimere o la pentemimere, oltrepassando i confini del verso, ingenera una tensione inesaurita e una forte coesione concettuale, secondo la tendenza stilistica di matrice virgiliana, di cui Aratore riduce comunque il gioco complesso e variato della dislocazione delle pause in punti metricamente meno evidenti, proprio per evitare rallentamenti e attriti nella partitura ritmica'. Sugli schemi metrici e i fenomeni di elisione cf. Martorelli, p. 147: anche a proposito di questi ultimi Aratore si colloca sulla linea inaugurata da Ovidio di riduzione considerevole, rispetto a Virgilio, di aferesi e sinalefi.

³⁰ Deproost 1989, p. 147.

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Riassunto

Aratore all'inizio dell'*Historia apostolica* ricorda per bocca di Pietro la fine di Giuda, fondendo elementi degli Atti degli Apostoli con particolari desumibili esclusivamente dal Vangelo di Matteo. La selezione di certe caratteristiche piuttosto che altre ha lo scopo di descrivere nel peggiore dei modi l'apostolo traditore. Per farlo il poeta evoca anche Ovidio, per ciò che concerne la sfida alla divinità e l'immagine del corpo sospeso tra terra e cielo, e Lucano per quanto riguarda l'orrore del tradimento e della morte di Giuda. In particolare in queste pagine si tenta di mostrare, a partire da studi precedenti, la presenza in filigrana in questi versi dell'episodio di Dedalo e Icaro dell'ottavo libro delle *Metamorfosi*.

Abstract

Peter, at the beginning of Arator's *Historia apostolica*, describes Judas' death, merging elements of the Acts of the Apostles with parts that we can read only in the Gospel of Matthew. The selection of certain features rather than others is intended to construct a description as negative as possible of the apostle who betrayed Jesus. For the same purpose, the poet also evokes Ovid (regarding the challenge to the divinity and the image of the body suspended between earth and sky) and Lucan (regarding Judas' betrayal and his horrible death). In this contribution, starting from the results achieved by previous studies, I try to show in these hexameters the hidden presence of the episode of Daedalus and Icarus (*met.* VIII. 183-235).

THE METRICAL FORMS
OF THE ELEGIAC DISTICH
IN LATE ANTIQUITY.

OVID IN VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS

1. The importance of Ovid for later poetry, be it hexameter or elegiac, does not, I believe, require any lengthy defence. Yet the significance of the Ovidian interpretation of metre in the hexameter and the elegiac distich in late antiquity nonetheless seems not to have been given the full attention that the topic merits.¹ Elsewhere I have tried to delineate the degree of success of the Ovidian metrical model in the stichic hexameter² and elegiac distich,³ which was certainly more limited than what might have been expected *a priori*.

Here I intend to examine the particular case of Venantius Fortunatus, who is probably the late antique poet in whose work one can see the influence of Ovid most strongly,⁴ as regards

¹ The analyses of Duckworth (esp. 1966, 1967, 1969), whose treatment of the stichic hexameter in essence identifies a Vergilian model and an Ovidian model, suffer above all, though not only, from limiting the investigation to the realisation of the metrical scheme.

² Ceccarelli 2008, pp. 199-205.

³ In a general study of the elegiac distich, currently in press (*Contributions to the History of the Latin Elegiac Distich*, forthcoming from Brepols). I refer to this study for bibliography that goes beyond the references indispensable for the discussion that I am presenting here.

⁴ There is obviously no need to stress the general importance of the presence of Ovid in Venantius Fortunatus. Echoes of Ovid in Venantius can be found in the collection of *loci* by M. Manitius (in Krusch 1885, pp. 132-137); for additions to Manitius see Blomgren 1944, pp. 86 and 1981. On the general influence of Ovid on Venantius see Consolino 1977; in particular on the presence of the *Heroides* in *carm.* 6. 5 (*De Gelesuintha*), 8. 3 (*De virginitate*) and *app.* 1 (*De excidio Thoringiae*) see Schmid 1959; Bulst 1963, pp. 374-379 [1984, pp. 48-54]; Consolino 1993; Campanale 1995; Walz 2001, pp. 534-537; Bisanti 2009; Eick-

especially the interpretation of the metrical forms;⁵ the extent to which the Ovidian example influenced Venantius' construction of the verse thus seems to me to merit a specific study.⁶ In the present context I intend to address specifically the elegiac distich.⁷

Naturally, before proceeding any further with the argument, I should specify what in particular characterises the Ovidian distich. Summarising (and inevitably simplifying) the issue,⁸ I may explain that by 'Ovidian' distich I am referring to a distich which: is characterised by a strong tendency to dactyllicity;⁹ tends to increase to the maximum the dactylic realisations in the first position of the hexameter; excludes almost completely the lines without break in the third foot; introduces a particular distribution of dactylic realisations, with the fourth position more dactylic than the third position and, in some works, more so than the second position; admits with relative freedom

meyer 2012, pp. 57-69; Wasyl 2015. Harwardt 2005 limits herself to examining a section of the *Vita Martini* (l. 389-413), in which she detects the presence of a passage of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (x. 17-39).

⁵ It is not possible here to go into the problem of the authenticity of the *In laudem Sanctae Mariae*, which I have discussed, from the point of view of the treatment of the metre, in Ceccarelli 2015; here I limit myself to recalling that the metrical technique of this little poem in various points presents notable differences from that of Venantius Fortunatus.

⁶ As regards the relations between the stichic hexameter of Ovid and that of Venantius, I refer to the discussion in Ceccarelli 2008, esp. pp. 204-205. Here I recall that the hexameter of the *Vita Martini* of Venantius clearly seems influenced by that of the *Metamorphoses*, but with the presence of variations that are not merely marginal.

⁷ There are some data on the distich of Venantius, based on the first thousand distichs of the latter, in comparison to Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid (for whom the data of Platnauer 1951 are reused) in Reydellet 1994, pp. LXIII-LXVIII. Beyond strictly metrical aspects, Reydellet shows that, in comparison with the practice of the classical elegists, Venantius specially seeks out a not grammatically determined rhyme between the two hemistichs of the pentameter; see also Reydellet 1993, pp. 87-88; Roberts 2016, p. 171.

⁸ For an examination in more depth of the evolution that led from the distich of Catullus (the first Latin elegiac poet for whom we have sufficient material to detect a, so to speak, metrical personality) to that of Ovid I must refer to Ceccarelli 2012, as well as to the study in press cited above (n. 3).

⁹ Of course with reference to the Latin interpretation of the distich: for the distich, like the stichic hexameter, the proportion of dactyls relative to spondees is clearly lower in the Latin authors than in the Greek ones.

the fourth-foot trochaic line-break;¹⁰ in the pentameter as a rule admits only bisyllabic clausulae (with a strong tendency to limit the exceptions to quadrisyllabic words); and avoids realising the final element with an open syllable with short vowel. In the exilic works and the double *Heroides* Ovid strongly reduces the presence of the third-foot trochaic line-break – in practice in these works the semiquinaria line-break tends, without quite getting there completely, to become the fixed line-break of the hexameter. To these characteristics, which are entirely or in large part innovations by Ovid,¹¹ can be added others which, without being exclusive to him, nonetheless contribute to his characteristic metrical style; I mean here the limitation of non-canonical clausulae in the hexameter and the reduction in frequency of synaloephae in both the hexameter and the pentameter. We may add that Ovid admits in a moderate form an innovation introduced by Tibullus, viz. the exclusion of iambic words from the clausula of the first hemistich of the pentameter.¹²

The analysis of the relation between Venantius Fortunatus and Ovid from the point of view of the metrical treatment of the distich may be complicated by two factors that must unavoidably be taken into account. The first is the chronological evolution that can be observed in the treatment of some features of the Ovidian distich: we have already noted above how the play of the third-foot trochaic line-breaks becomes more rigid with

¹⁰ This line-break, prohibited or avoided in the Greek hexameter, still has a limited frequency, which may complicate the evaluation of its presence in corpora of small size, such as a large part of those available to us in the case of the post-Ovidian elegiac distich.

¹¹ Certainly the increase in proportion of dactylic realisations compared to the point of departure represented, for the elegiac distich, by Catullus does not begin with Ovid; but Ovid achieves levels not reached by any of his predecessors. The same point can be made about the exclusion of non-bisyllabic words from the clausula of the pentameter, which was introduced by Tibullus, picked up again by Propertius and taken to the extreme by Ovid.

¹² This is what in the Alexandrian hexameter is Meyer's Second Law, applicable to both the elegiac hexameter and the stichic one; see Meyer 1884, pp. 980-983 and 1032-1033. In more recent times this topic has been addressed by Veremans 1990. On the point cf. also Sturtevant 1924, pp. 75-78 (but his discussion of the phenomenon in Ovid is based on only part of his oeuvre and does not seem to have been pursued in sufficient depth); Bréguet 1946, pp. 79-81. In passing I may note that Tibullus does not in turn appear interested in limiting the presence of trochaic words before the semiquinaria of the hexameter.

the passage of time; other features for which an evolution can be detected in Ovid will come to light in the course of the discussion. In order to try to take account of this fact, the data concerning Ovid's distich will be presented in disaggregated form, distinguishing between the erotic works (*Amores*, *Remedia*, *Ars*),¹³ the *Fasti* and the exilic works respectively.¹⁴ I have also thought it appropriate to present separately the data concerning the single *Heroides* on the one hand, and the double ones on the other, without of course intending by this decision to take up a position on the problems of authenticity (and as regards the double *Heroides*, if we admit authenticity, of chronology) that are bound up with these works.

A second factor is that one cannot rule out that the elegiac hexameter of Venantius may have been influenced also by the stichic hexameter of the *Metamorphoses*, in the cases (not many, in truth) in which one can detect in Ovid a difference in treatment between stichic hexameter and elegiac hexameter. Given this possibility it has seemed wise also to include in the discussion data concerning the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses*.¹⁵

After these preliminary remarks, we may begin the analysis.

2. One of the strongly characteristic features of Ovidian verse in general is the high frequency (for the Latin hexameter) of dactylic realisations. In the stichic hexameter, the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses* is the most dactylic in absolute terms in the classical period, with the exception of Calpurnius Siculus and the *Laus Pisonis*; among late antique authors it is exceeded only by Arator and, precisely, by Venantius Fortunatus. An analogous

¹³ I have not included the fragment of the *Medicamina faciei*, given the small size of what survives of this work.

¹⁴ That the *Fasti* were revised at Tomi is well known; on the other hand it is improbable that the revision was so thorough as to affect to a significant degree the discussion I am presenting here – for bibliographical references on the topic I refer to Ceccarelli 2012, p. 60 n. 48.

¹⁵ The data presented in this study are drawn from my studies cited above on the elegiac hexameter and on the distich, to which I refer also for citation of the reference editions used. I note here that lines that present a localised corruption have not been taken into account for the ratios between dactyls and spondees; they have, however, been evaluated, as regards the part not affected by the corruption, in the other cases; this results in some variations in the total number of lines examined in each case.

point holds for the elegiac distich: the elegiac hexameter of Ovid is certainly the most dactylic among the classical authors; among the late antique authors a higher frequency is presented only by Venantius Fortunatus. In the pentameter we find above the Ovidian level, as well as Venantius, also Dracontius, Prudentius and Avianus.

Still concerning the dactylic realisations of the hexameter, Ovid introduces a particular distribution among the various positions in the line, in which the fourth position is more dactylic than the third (and in part of his oeuvre also more so than the second position) – the most frequent distribution in the Latin hexameter is one in which the dactyls are found in decreasing order from first to fourth position.

In relation to this, the picture for the dactylic realisations of the hexameter is summarised in tables 1 and 1a.¹⁶

It is clear that Venantius exceeds the level reached by Ovid as regards the general ratio between dactyls and spondees (tab. 1a)¹⁷ and that he adopts the revaluation of the fourth foot compared to the third one (tab. 1).

On the first aspect, we have already noted that Venantius presents a more dactylic hexameter than Ovid: the maximum frequency among the various periods of Ovid's career is found in the single *Heroides*, standing at 56.88% (2710 dactyls out of 4764 positions); in Venantius we have 57.69% (8317 dactyls out of 14,416 positions). On the other hand Venantius presents a distribution of dactyls among the various positions that is more balanced than that of Ovid. As already noted, the hexameter of Ovid is characterised also by a strong tendency towards a dactylic realisation of the first position, where the dactyls never fall below 80% and reach almost 90% in the *Fasti*. Now, the case of the first position is the only one in which Venantius falls below the Ovidian zone, standing at 72.61% (with 2617 dactyls out of 3604 hexameters); Ovid's minimum value is here

¹⁶ The tables are appended at the end of the article.

¹⁷ Venantius Fortunatus achieves an average frequency of 57.69% (yielded by 8317 dactyls out of 14,416 positions); Ovid stands at 54.09% (23,556 dactyls out of 43,552 positions). Also, the highest point among the various phases of Ovid's career, represented by the single *Heroides*, remains (slightly) below Venantius, for whom see the remarks in the main text.

the 80.77% of the erotic works (with 2231 dactyls out of 2762 hexameters), a value clearly higher than that of Venantius. The deficit in first position is compensated by the increase in second and third position, where Venantius rises above the Ovidian zone. In second position Venantius has 2294 dactyls, or 63.65%, whereas Ovid reaches the maximum with the *Metamorphoses*, with 6127 dactyls out of 11,863 hexameters, or 51.65% –for the elegiac hexameter of Ovid the highest frequency is that of the single *Heroides*, with 50.97% (607 dactyls out of 1191 hexameters). In third position Venantius presents 45.84% (with 1652 dactyls), while Ovid does not rise above the 41.35% of the erotic works (1142 dactyls out of 2762 hexameters): the average frequency is 38.11% (4149 dactyls out of 10,888 hexameters). In fourth position Venantius falls within the Ovidian zone: his 48.67% (with 1754 dactyls) lies halfway between the 53.57% of the single *Heroides* (638 dactyls out of 1191 hexameters) and the 43.19% of the erotic works (1193 out of 2762). Overall, the result for the fourth position in Venantius is slightly higher than that of the elegiac hexameter of Ovid taken as a whole, which stands at 46% (yielded by 5008 dactyls out of 10,888 hexameters).

The greater balance in the distribution of the dactyls in Venantius Fortunatus can be evaluated by using the coefficient of variation (tab. 1b):¹⁸ for the four positions of Ovid's hexameter the value of this coefficient is equal to 0.34 for the elegiac hexameter (with a range that runs from 0.27 in the single *Heroides* to 0.38 in the *Fasti*), to 0.29 for the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses*;¹⁹ Venantius stands at 0.19,²⁰ clearly below the minimum value in Ovid. The distances between the various positions can be evaluated, on the other hand, by using the Yule coefficient:²¹

¹⁸ The coefficient of variation is an index of the regularity of the distribution: the higher it is, the more irregular is the distribution. On this coefficient, on its significance and on the ways of calculating it, see e.g. Muller 1973, pp. 66-67 and 69-70.

¹⁹ The value of the coefficient for the hexameter of Ovid considered without distinction between stichic and elegiac hexameters is 0.31.

²⁰ The same value is presented by the stichic hexameter of the *Vita Martini*.

²¹ This coefficient can be used to evaluate the intensity of the relation between two variables in two subjects (here the dactylic and spondaic realisation

for the sake of simplicity I limit myself here to giving the values calculated in each position for Venantius in relation to the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses* on the one hand, and on the other in relation to the elegiac hexameter of Ovid as a whole without distinguishing between the various phases of his career. For the elegiac hexameter we get 0.36 in first position, -0.32 in second, -0.16 in third, -0.05 in fourth, -0.07 overall;²² for the stichic hexameter, respectively, 0.25, -0.24, -0.10, -0.09, -0.06. The calculation of this index confirms what has been observed: while the increased dactyllicity of the hexameter characteristic of Ovid is picked up by Venantius, the latter interprets the model freely in some particular aspects; in particular, he introduces a pronounced decrease in the dactylic realisations in first position, compensated by an increase in the other positions, notably more pronounced in second than in third and fourth position: the result is a more balanced hexameter than that of Ovid.

As regards the revaluation of the fourth position, with respect to the third, table 1 shows that the dactylic realisations in fourth position are always higher than those in third position in all phases of Ovid's career and in Venantius.²³ The ratio between the dactylic realisations in the two positions in Ovid becomes less balanced over the course of time, passing from 1.04 in the erotic works²⁴ to 1.29 in the exilic works – the maximum point

in the various phases of Ovid's career and in Venantius Fortunatus). The value of this coefficient runs from a maximum of +1 to a minimum of -1. The value 0 indicates identical behaviour by the two subjects. On this coefficient in general and the ways of calculating it I refer to Muller 1973, pp 148-149.

²² A positive value indicates a greater degree of dactyllicity in Ovid, a negative value indicates, of course, the contrary.

²³ In the single and double *Heroides* and in the *Fasti* the fourth position is more dactylic even than the second. In the exilic works and in the elegiac works as a whole, the difference in favour of the second position is much reduced. Venantius does not follow Ovid here. The ratio between the realisations in fourth and in second position is 0.76, below Ovid's minimum point, represented by the 0.85 of the erotic works.

²⁴ This ratio may appear only slightly favourable to the fourth position; however, the importance of the imbalance is increased by the fact that we here have an inversion of the tendency with respect to the normal habits of the Latin hexameter.

is represented by the double *Heroides*, at 1.39. Here Venantius, with 1.06, re-enters the Ovidian zone, close to its lower limit.

3. An analogous point can be made for the pentameter. The picture is summarised in tab. 2.

Here too the greater dactylicity typical of Ovid's pentameter becomes even stronger, overall: Venantius Fortunatus reaches 64.23% (yielded by 4632 dactylic realisations out of 7212 positions); the highest point reached by Ovid is the 62.46% of the single *Heroides* (1489 dactyls out of 2384 positions).²⁵ Venantius here also clearly reduces the proportion of dactylic realisations in first position: the minimum value in Ovid is that of the exilic works, at 75.68% (2779 dactyls out of 3672 pentameters), while Venantius drops below 70%, at 69.16% (yielded by 2494 dactyls out of 3606 pentameters). The deficit presented by the first position in Venantius is generously compensated by the increase in dactyls in second position: here Venantius almost reaches 60% (59.29%, with 2138 dactyls), while the highest point in Ovid, again represented by the single *Heroides*, does not reach 45%, standing at 43.20% (515 dactyls out of 1192 pentameters).²⁶

The ratio between first and second position, in parallel to what occurs in the hexameter, is obviously much more balanced in Venantius than in Ovid. In Ovid this ratio ranges from the 1.89 of the *Fasti* to the 2.24 of the exilic works (2.04 in all the works as a whole), while in Venantius Fortunatus we get a value of 1.17. Here too use of the Yule coefficient clarifies the picture further: the comparison of Venantius with the elegiac works of Ovid as a whole yields a value of 0.23 for the first position, -0.40 for the second, -0.13 for the total.

4. Another interesting point about the realisation of the metrical scheme concerns the admission of an open syllable with short vowel in the final element of the line.

²⁵ The average frequency for the elegiac works of Ovid as a whole is 58.19%, with 12,675 dactyls out of 21,782 positions.

²⁶ And the entire oeuvre of Ovid remains below 40%; we have 4167 dactyls out of 10,891 pentameters, or 38.26%.

Thus, as regards the pentameter (tab. 3), it is known that Ovid avoids closing the pentameter with a syllable of this type; it is a feature that meets with chequered success in the post-Ovidian poets. Venantius Fortunatus picks up this trait, with his 43 cases out of 3606 pentameters, or 1.19%, lying easily within the Ovidian zone, which is bounded at the lower end by the *Fasti* (0.97% out of 2484 pentameters) and at the upper end by the single *Heroides* (1.84%, out of 1193 pentameters).

The treatment of the final element of the hexameter from this point of view has received much less attention.²⁷ This is admittedly a feature that cannot be considered characteristic of the Ovidian style, in that Ovid does not seem especially interested in avoiding open syllables with short vowels in this position – nor in increasing their number (tab. 4). Nonetheless it may be worthwhile to note that in this case too Venantius Fortunatus, with 7.93% (yielded by 286 instances out of 3606 pentameters), falls easily within the Ovidian zone, which here extends from the 8.92% of the exilic works (328 out of 3679 hexameters) to the 5.92% of the *Fasti* (147 out of 2484). The average frequency for the elegiac hexameter of Ovid is at the same level as that of Venantius, with 7.62%, yielded by 831 instances out of 10,904 hexameters (tab. 4).²⁸

5.1. In the treatment of the line-breaks Ovid presents a peculiar trait; this is the almost complete elimination of lines with no break in the third foot. As regards the alternative to the semiquinaria represented by the third-foot trochaic break, Ovid's preferences change over time: one observes an evident diminution of the proportion of this line-break in the exilic works, which tend, though without getting there completely, toward a hexameter

²⁷ I refer to the bibliography on the topic, which is not extensive, in Ceccarelli 2014, where I have attempted to present a picture of the phenomenon limited to the stichic hexameter; for the hexameter of the distich and for the pentameter I must refer here too to my study of the elegiac distich currently in press (for the classical distich see Ceccarelli 2012, pp. 70-72 and 90).

²⁸ The frequency in the hexameter *kata stichon* is slightly higher: here we have 8.88%, with 1055 instances out of 11,883 hexameters. For Venantius Fortunatus the frequency in the stichic hexameter of the *Vita Martini* is practically identical to that of the elegiac hexameter: we have 8.07%, yielded by 181 instances out of 2243 hexameter).

with a fixed semiquinaria as line-break.²⁹ The picture is presented in table 5, which shows clearly the progressive diminution of the proportion of third-foot trochaic break.

As regards the first aspect, Venantius is certainly less rigid than Ovid in excluding the lines without line-break in the third foot: whereas Ovid admits 12 verses of this type in total out of the more than 22,000 hexameters in his corpus,³⁰ Venantius allows 27 of them into his circa 3600 hexameters: his technique is certainly much more liberal than that of Ovid, but the frequency nonetheless remains low, at less than 1%.³¹

As regards the third-foot trochaic break, the range between the two extremes in Ovid is fairly wide: the frequency (which naturally, given the trivial proportion of lines without line-break in the third foot, is the mirror opposite of that of the semiquinaria) reaches its maximum point in the 10.78% of the *Metamorphoses* (1280 line-breaks out of 11,873 hexameters). The elegiac hexameter here does not exceed the 9.15% of the single *Heroides* (109 line-breaks out of 1191); the exilic works lie much lower, at 3.94% (145 line-breaks out of 3676), a frequency that is lower than half that of the single *Heroides*, the erotic works (8.68%, with 240 line-breaks out of 2765) and the *Fasti* (7.89%, with 196 line-breaks out of 2484). The distance between the Roman and exilic works (all of which are very close to the double *Heroides*)³² is, I repeat, clear.

We reach the same conclusion if we calculate the frequency of the third-foot trochaic breaks only out of the dactylic realisations of the third position: in this case the range runs from the 26.42% of the *Metamorphoses* (out of 4844 dactyls) and

²⁹ I recall that the diaeresis between third and fourth foot is admitted only in the case of monosyllables and pyrrhics.

³⁰ Before Ovid lines of this type are not very frequent, but cannot be defined as exceptional. Thus Catullus, the most restrictive pre-Ovidian poet, presents just one example of them in 321 elegiac hexameters, but five in the 409 hexameters of poem 64. In the *Aeneid* I find 373 instances out of 9834 hexameters, or 3.79%.

³¹ It is possible that the stichic hexameter of Venantius is here to some degree more tolerant than the elegiac hexameter of the same author: the *Vita Martini* permits 33 of them (against 27) out of a lower number of lines (2242).

³² Which in their turn drop to 3.32%, yielded by 26 cases of third-foot trochaic break out of 782 hexameters.

the 22.20% of the single *Heroides* (out of 491) to the 11.20% (out of 1295) of the exilic books and the 9.39% (out of 277) of the double *Heroides*. Certainly, it is not very difficult to enter such a large bracket as in these cases: yet it still remains a fact that Venantius in both cases lies very close to the double *Heroides* and to the exilic works, which finish up the Ovidian rankings both in the total number of instances and in the instances calculated only out of the dactylic realisations: in Venantius the frequency of the third-foot trochaic break stands at 4.77% if calculated out of the total number of lines (3606), and at 10.41% if the calculation is done out of the dactyls in third position (1652).³³

5.2. The treatment of the fourth-foot trochaic breaks is more complex: here the choice is between the semiseptenaria, the diaeresis after the fourth foot³⁴ and the fourth-foot trochaic break (of course the possibility of lines without line-break in fourth position is not excluded). We may recall here that the Latin poets enjoy greater freedom than the Greeks, in that in the Greek hexameter the fourth-foot trochaic break and the diaeresis after a spondaic word are prohibited or avoided.

In the treatment of the line-breaks in the fourth foot Ovid is certainly distinguished by his relative tolerance for the fourth-foot trochaic break, which, as we have just recalled, is at the least avoided in the Greek hexameter. From another point of view we may note that the line-break in the fourth position is one of the few features for which it is possible to detect a difference between the stichic Ovid and the elegiac Ovid: the former seems to show a tendency to limit to some degree the proportion of the semiseptenaria relative to the elegiac works.

The general picture for Ovid and Venantius Fortunatus is summarised in table 6. We may observe straightaway that Venantius picks up from Ovid the tolerance for the fourth-foot trochaic

³³ We may add that the hexameter of the *Vita Martini* does not depart in this aspect from the elegiac hexameter of Venantius: the 115 third-foot trochaic breaks that I have found in this work represent 5.13% out of its 2242 hexameters and 10.66% of its 1079 dactyls in third position.

³⁴ For convenience I shall use the term 'spondaic bucolic' in the case of a spondaic fourth foot and 'dactylic bucolic' in the case of a dactylic fourth foot.

break, which in Venantius reaches almost 10%; we have 346 instances out of 3606 hexameters:³⁵ a higher frequency is found only in the *Consolatio ad Liviam* among the elegiac poets and in the *Ars poetica* of Horace among the authors of stichic hexameters. The highest point in Ovid is represented by the single *Heroides*, with 7.22% (86 instances out of 1191 hexameters).³⁶ Venantius thus seems to pick up and reinforce a tendency in the hexameter, both stichic and elegiac, of Ovid.

Still regarding the treatment of the line-breaks of the fourth foot, Venantius Fortunatus emerges above the Ovidian sphere in the case of the diaeresis, be it after a dactylic fourth foot or after a spondaic fourth foot. The dactylic diaeresis appears in Venantius 399 times out of 3606 hexameters, or 11.06%, and out of 1754 dactyls, or 22.75%; in Ovid the highest frequency is found in the *Metamorphoses* (1223 out of 11,872, or 10.30%) and the single *Heroides* (112 out of 1191, or 9.40%) when calculated out of the number of lines; and again in the *Metamorphoses* (23.26% out of 5258 dactyls) and the single *Heroides* (17.55% out of 638) if the calculation is done out of the number of dactylic realisations of the fourth position.³⁷

In turn, the spondaic diaeresis is found in the elegiac hexameter of Venantius in 624 hexameters, or 17.30% out of 3606 lines, and 33.73% out of 1850 spondees in fourth position. Here the maximum point for Ovid is represented by the 15.01% of the erotic works (out of 2765 hexameters); if the calculation is done out of the spondaic realisations of the fourth position we get the 26.84% of the *Metamorphoses* (1775 spondaic diaereses

³⁵ The same tolerance is found in the *Vita Martini*, with 223 instances out of 2242, or 9.95%.

³⁶ This point would hold also if one were to calculate the frequency solely out of the dactylic realisations of the fourth position: in this case for Venantius we would have 19.73%, yielded by 346 fourth-foot trochaic breaks out of 1754 dactyls; the highest frequency among the various phases of Ovid's activity would be represented by the 15.35% of the *Metamorphoses* (807 line-breaks out of 5258 dactyls) and by the 14.99% (168 line-breaks out of 1121 dactyls) of the *Fasti* among the elegiac works.

³⁷ In this case, the frequency in the elegiac hexameter of Venantius would be lower than that of the *Metamorphoses*; Venantius again exceeds Ovid if we take into consideration the hexameter of the *Vita Martini*: here the frequency out of the dactyls in fourth position would reach 27.85% (315 instances out of 1131).

out of 6614 spondees) and the 26.43% of the erotic works (out of 1570 spondees), falling below the limit set by Venantius.

The surplus that appears in the cases just examined is compensated by a diminution in the proportion of the semiseptenaria, less pronounced relative to the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses* than relative to that of the elegiac works, but nonetheless clear: in Ovid the lowest point for the elegiac hexameter is represented by the *Fasti* (with 70.13% out of 2484 hexameters); the *Metamorphoses* drop to 64.69% (out of 11,872 hexameters). Venantius lies at 59.48% (out of 3606 hexameters) – we may add that the *Vita Martini* drops further, to 55.13% (out of 2242 hexameters).³⁸

A final observation can be made about the hexameters without line-break in the fourth foot. The elegiac hexameter of Venantius in this case too lies outside the range of variation of the elegiac Ovid: in Venantius we have 92 hexameters of this type out of 3606, or a frequency of 2.55%; the highest point for the elegiac Ovid is represented by the 2.20% of the exilic works (81 out of 3675), while the average for the whole of the Ovidian distich stands at 1.66% (with 181 instances out of 10,897). Here the *Metamorphoses* present a higher frequency, namely 3.26%, yielded by 387 instances out of 11,872, but one that is lower than that of the *Vita Martini*, which with 82 instances out of 2242 hexameters reaches 3.66%. But in any case we are dealing with small numbers of instances in absolute terms and hence the increase in frequency that can be detected in Venantius compared to Ovid may have only marginal importance.

In the case of the line-breaks in the fourth foot, Venantius thus seems to pick up two traits that characterise the Ovidian hexameter, the increase in the proportion of fourth-foot trochaic breaks

³⁸ The increase in frequency of the diaeresis and of the fourth-foot trochaic break brings with it an increase in the cases in which there is correspondence between word-accent and beat in the fourth foot. The frequency of this coincidence in Venantius has been pointed out by Heikkinen 2004. pp. 23-24 – Heikkinen is concerned with the stichic hexameter of Venantius, but his observation can be extended to the elegiac hexameter, even if in the latter the proportion of diaeresis and of fourth-foot trochaic break is smaller: in the *Vita Martini* the cases of diaeresis after the fourth foot and of fourth-foot trochaic break come to 41.21% (with 924 total instances out of 2242 hexameters), in the elegiac hexameter it stands at 37.96% (1369 out of 3606).

and the diminution of that of semiseptenariae. The disproportion in absolute terms between the two phenomena (the semiseptenaria obviously being much more strongly present than the fourth-foot trochaic break) requires a compensation, which is provided by an increase in the frequency of the other available solutions, especially by the diaeresis after the fourth position, be it dactylic or spondaic.

6. The treatment of the clausulae in Ovid is distinctive in both the hexameter and the pentameter. In the former this is through the restriction of the proportion of non-canonical clausulae; in the latter through the limitation as far as possible of the presence of non-bisyllabic clausulae – without exceptions in the case of the erotic works, with some deviation in the *Fasti*, the double *Heroides* and the exilic works. In both cases these are tendencies which do not appear for the first time in Ovid, but which in Ovid are reinforced in the direction of exclusivity, though without quite reaching that point, except for the pentameter in the first phase of his career.

For the clausulae of the hexameter we may refer to table 7, arranged in descending order of frequency of non-canonical clausulae.³⁹

As regards the ratios between the type *condere gentem* and the type *conde sepulcro*, Venantius clearly prefers the type *conde sepulcro* (the ratio between the two types is 1.19 to 1 in favour of *conde sepulcro*); but this datum is hardly indicative for the purposes of a comparison with Ovid, in that the latter's preferences change in the course of his career, with a preference for *conde sepulcro* in the erotic works and in the single *Heroides* (the ratio between the two types is respectively 1.29 and 1.23 to 1 in favour of *conde sepulcro*), while in the other works it is the type *condere gentem* that is more prevalent – though in the exilic works the ratio between *conde sepulcro* and *condere gentem* is more balanced, standing at 0.96.

The interesting data here are yielded above all by the treatment of non-canonical clausulae. Ovid limits them strongly, with

³⁹ By non-canonical clausulae I mean the types other than *condere gentem*, *conde sepulcro* and *gente tot annos*.

a range between 1% (0.94%) in the erotic works, in which we find 26 non-canonical clausulae in 2766 hexameters, and 2% (2.05%) in the double *Heroides* (16 out of 782). Matching this picture is the practice of Venantius, in whose work we find 52 non-canonical clausulae in 3607 hexameters, or 1.44%.⁴⁰ Yet if Venantius is thus in accord with Ovid in the space given to non-canonical clausulae, he is clearly distant from him in the types of non-canonical clausulae admitted (tab. 9): 14 of the 52 instances are represented by the type *quadrupedantum*, 4 by *di genuerunt*, both types which seem much less welcome in the elegiac hexameter of Ovid: *quadrupedantum* is represented in total 3 times out 156 non-canonical clausulae, *di genuerunt* is absent. In the hexameter of the *Metamorphoses* the two types are not much more favoured: *di genuerunt* is again absent, *quadrupedantum* is represented by 2 instances out of 152 non-canonical clausulae. On the other hand, the elegiac hexameter of Venantius Fortunatus does not present spondaic clausulae,⁴¹ which are found 17 times in the elegiac hexameter of Ovid (but not in the double *Heroides* or in the exilic works) and 36 times in the *Metamorphoses*. In sum, Venantius Fortunatus picks up the quantitative limitations, so to speak, upon the use of the non-canonical clausulae, but does not notice, or does not feel bound by, those concerning verbal metre.

These observations hold in large part also for the clausula of the pentameter (tab. 8).

The treatment of the clausula of the pentameter is perhaps the most clearly characteristic feature from the metrical point of view in the Ovidian distich.⁴² It is known that the tendency towards the bisyllabic clausula was introduced by Tibullus, in whose work it accounts for around 90% of the pentameters, and was picked up

⁴⁰ Venantius seems more tolerant of non-canonical clausulae in his stichic hexameter: there are 72 out of 2242, or 3.21%.

⁴¹ There is one case in the *Vita Martini*.

⁴² In the medieval treatises, the obligation for a bisyllabic clausula is explicitly enjoined; thus Matthew of Vendôme: 'Pentameter semper in dissyllabis, nisi causa obstiterit impulsiva, debet terminari' (*ars versificatoria* IV. 39) or Eberhard the German: 'pentameter praeter dissyllaba cuncta relegat / sedis postremae de regione suae' (*Laborintus* 823-824). On the near-general respect for the rule in medieval elegiac poetry, see Orlandi 1988, pp. 163-164 [2008, p. 355].

by the late Propertius;⁴³ Ovid takes it to the extreme in the erotic works, whereas he admits some exceptions in the *Fasti* and in the exilic works.⁴⁴

Venantius appears in line with Ovid as regards the limitation to bisyllabic words: the 68 exceptions⁴⁵ out of 3605 pentameters present in his works constitute less than 2%, which is at the levels of the exilic Ovid. Again, where Venantius is distinguished from Ovid is in the typology of the exceptions admitted: Venantius has no problem with regard to trisyllabic words, which thus represent in his work the majority of the exceptions (40 out of 68);⁴⁶ these are almost completely excluded by Ovid. Here too, therefore, Venantius seems attentive to the more obvious element, so to speak, but not to the further limitations upon verbal metre that determine the Ovidian treatment.

7. A possible example of the scant attention (or scant interest) in limitations on verbal metre that are, so to speak, not immediately obvious may perhaps be detected in the treatment of the iambic words at the end of the first hemistich of the pentameter.

⁴³ Who pushes it beyond Tibullus: in the fourth book there are eight non-bisyllabic clausulae, less than 2% of the lines. A point that may be worth emphasising: the presence of a Tibullan model to rival the Ovidian one would be hard to suppose for Venantius, given that there is little evidence for widespread reading of Tibullus in late antiquity (as stressed by Uden 2012, p. 460).

⁴⁴ Another exception would be represented by a pentameter cited by Quintilian (frg. 4 Blänsd. = 6 Lenz) and drawn probably from an epigram; but of course we cannot say anything about the metrical technique of the epigrams (see also Courtney, p. 309). On the spurious character of *her.* 14. 62, which would give a case of a trisyllabic clausula, see already Ehwald 1896, p. 11 and 1900, p. 18; Housman 1897, pp. 287-288 [1972, pp. 406-407] and then Latta 1963, pp. 140-141, n. 12; Reeson 2001, pp. 267-268.

⁴⁵ Which become 67 if one accepts the conjecture *lacticolora manus* of Blomgren 1971, pp. 131-133 for *carm. app.* 1. 16; the transmitted *lacticolor* would result in a trisyllabic clausula, leaving aside the acceptability of *mulier* for the corrupt transmitted *amati*, as proposed by Mommsen. Further, one should bear in mind that poem II. 15, regarded as spurious by Leo 1881, *ad loc.* (with whom Meyer 1901, pp. 28 and 76-78 is in agreement; there is a note in this direction also in Blomgren 1933, p. 79), presents six non-bisyllabic clausulae, three of them trisyllabic, out of ten pentameters.

⁴⁶ Even if one does not take into account the doubtful cases presented in the previous note, the trisyllabic clausulae remain in the majority (36 out of 61).

As mentioned above, in the Latin hexameter this norm is certainly accepted by Tibullus,⁴⁷ while Ovid exhibits rather a moderate interest. In this case Venantius Fortunatus indeed departs clearly from Ovid (tab. 10): in Venantius we find a word of this type at the end of the first hemistich of the pentameter 769 times out of 3606 lines (21.33%) and out of 2138 dactylic realisations of the second position of the pentameter (35.97%); Ovid goes no further than, in the exilic works, 4.71% out of 3672 lines and 12.16% out of 1423 dactylic realisations. The total in Ovid amounts to 4.13% out of 10,891 pentameters and 10.80% out of 4167 dactyls.

It is evident that Venantius Fortunatus remains wholly indifferent to a limitation of clausulae of this type, in contrast to the limitations accepted by Ovid: if we calculate the frequency out of the total number of lines, more than one pentameter in five presents this clausula of the first hemistich, in Ovid less than one in twenty; if we limit ourselves to the pentameters with a dactyl in second position, the frequency jumps in Venantius to more than one pentameter in three – in Ovid we stand at one pentameter in ten. Here, however, we may perhaps suspect that the increase in the iambic words in the clausula of the first hemistich in Venantius derives from the pursuit of parallelism between the two hemistichs of the pentameter.⁴⁸

8. Another aspect that in Ovid certainly deserves attention is the tendency towards reducing the frequency of synaloepha, even though it is not a feature exclusive to his technique, either in the hexameter or in the pentameter – a reduction which, however, while noticeable compared to the archaic stichic hexameter and to the distich of Catullus and of Propertius, is not pushed to the extreme. We may consult table 11.

Venantius presents a frequency higher than that of Ovid both in the hexameter (where, however, it remains below the *Metamor-*

⁴⁷ Who permits five or six violations in all his 621 hexameters (the case of 1. 3. 18 is textually uncertain).

⁴⁸ On the parallelism between the two hemistichs of the pentameter see Reydellet 1994, pp. LXVII-LXVIII.

phoses) and in the pentameter. In the elegiac hexameter the highest point in Ovid is represented by the 13.85% of the single *Heroides* (165 synaloephae in 1191 lines), while Venantius reaches 14.79%. The *Metamorphoses* offer 19.82% (2354 out of 11,874); but here Venantius behaves like Ovid: the stichic hexameter is more tolerant than the elegiac hexameter. The *Vita Martini* reaches 22.84%, with 512 synaloephae out of 2242 hexameters, thus again surpassing Ovid.

In the pentameter the high point for Ovid is the erotic works, with 6.44% (178 synaloephae in 2766 pentameters), while Venantius comes to 7.68% (277 out of 3605).

Yet both in the case of the hexameter and in that of the pentameter the discrepancy remains within a degree compatible with a definition of Venantius' style as 'Ovidian', particularly if we bear in mind that Vergil presents a frequency of synaloepha notably higher than that of Venantius; thus in Vergil the frequency of synaloepha exceeds 50% in the *Aeneid* and remains just below this threshold in the *Georgics* – yet in the *Eclogues* it comes to 27.23%. In Statius, another author certainly present in Fortunatus,⁴⁹ we have 38.28% in the *Thebaid*, 35.27% in the *Achilleis*, 25.54% in the *Silvae*; Tibullus presents a frequency of synaloepha that is close to that of Fortunatus – but we have already noted above that Tibullus cannot be considered among the possible models of Venantius Fortunatus.

We may add that Fortunatus accords with Ovid in admitting synaloepha with more freedom in the stichic hexameter than in the elegiac one. It is a not general preference among the Latin poets who are authors of both stichic hexameters and elegiac hexameters.⁵⁰

9. With more space and time available the analysis could continue, examining also other traits (a complete examination of all elements that could be taken into consideration would obviously

⁴⁹ See esp. Blomgren 1950.

⁵⁰ For a discussion in more depth of the relations between the elegiac hexameter and the stichic hexameter I can only refer here again to my study currently in press.

not be feasible) in addition to those that we have extrapolated as characteristic for the Ovidian construction of the elegiac distich; but I do not believe that an analysis of this type could add much to what has been observed already. I hope that the analyses presented have demonstrated what I proposed at the start of this discussion: if Ovid did not meet with special success among late antique authors, the case of Venantius Fortunatus shows that his manner of constructing the distich, at least in some zones and in some contexts, was an object of study and of emulation – emulation, however, that did not become slavish imitation of a model, at least when the student had enough personality and technical capacity, as is indeed the case with Venantius. It is possible that in some cases the failure to adopt an Ovidian trait is due to a failure to detect a specific feature of the model; but in other cases it is in all probability a deliberate choice: thus it is not likely that Venantius, who noted and adopted the very particular treatment of the fourth position of the hexameter by Ovid, did not take account of the other special features of the distribution of the dactyls in the body of the distich, features that did not in fact find an echo in the distich of Venantius. Thus, while Venantius picked up an Ovidian model (which confirms for us the importance of the latter at least in the cultural context in which Venantius moved), he did not feel bound to it to the point of not introducing personal variations, either in the direction of reinforcing the tendencies of the model, or in the contrary direction of attenuating them, or in the direction of a total refusal.

The study of a model and the assimilation of the lessons that can be drawn from it do not exclude in gifted students the individual elaboration of what they have learned; I hope that the analyses presented have succeeded in demonstrating that Venantius is one of the – few enough – late antique poets in whom we can recognise a gifted student of Ovid.⁵¹

⁵¹ I thank Orla Mulholland who, as well as competently translating this study, drew my attention to more than one obscurity or imprecision in the original text.

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Abstract

Venantius Fortunatus is probably the late antique poet most influenced by Ovid. regarding the interpretation of the metrical forms. This paper intends to deal specifically with Fortunatus' interpretation of the Ovidian model of the distich elegiac, pointing out that on one hand the distich of Fortunatus can certainly be considered Ovidian and on the other hand that Fortunatus has enough personality and technical capacity to introduce personal variations.

Tab. 1. Distribution of the dactylic realisations in the hexameter of Ovid and Venantius Fortunatus

	I	II	III	IV	TOT	V	I%	II%	III%	IV%	%TOT	RIV/III
Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	2231	1405	1142	1193	5971	2762	80.77	50.87	41.35	43.19	54.05	1.04
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	2209	1098	944	1118	5369	2481	89.04	44.26	38.05	45.06	54.10	1.18
Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	3153	1700	1295	1674	7822	3672	85.87	46.30	35.27	45.59	53.25	1.29
Ovid. <i>Her. I-XV</i>	974	607	491	638	2710	1191	81.78	50.97	41.23	53.57	56.88	1.30
Ovid. <i>Her. XVI-XXI</i>	674	348	277	385	1684	782	86.19	44.50	35.42	49.23	53.84	1.39
Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	9677	6127	4840	5253	25897	11863	81.57	51.65	40.80	44.28	54.58	1.09
Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	2617	2294	1652	1754	8317	3604	72.61	63.65	45.84	48.67	57.69	1.06
Ovid eleg. TOT.	9241	5158	4149	5008	23556	10888	84.87	47.37	38.11	46.00	54.09	1.21

R: ratio between the dactylic realisations

Tab. 1a. Dactylic realisations in the hexameter (in descending order of dactylic realisations)

I	I%	II	II%	III	III%	IV	IV%	TOT	TOT %
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	2209	Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	2294	Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	1652	Ovid. <i>Her. I-XV</i>	638	8317	57.69
Ovid. <i>Her. XVI-XXI</i>	674	Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	6127	Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	1142	Ovid. <i>Her. XVI-XXI</i>	385	2710	56.88
Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	3153	Ovid. <i>Her. I-XV</i>	607	Ovid. <i>Her. I-XV</i>	491	Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	1754	25897	54.58
Ovid. <i>Her. I-XV</i>	974	Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	1405	Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	4840	Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	1674	5369	54.10
Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	9677	Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	1700	Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	944	Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	1118	5971	54.05
Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	2231	Ovid. <i>Her. XVI-XXI</i>	348	Ovid. <i>Her. XVI-XXI</i>	277	Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	5253	1684	53.84
Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	2617	Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	1098	Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	1295	Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	1193	7822	53.25

Tab. 1b. Coefficient of variation in the hexameter

Ovid. Eorot.	0.29
Ovid. Fast.	0.38
Ovid. Exil.	0.36
Ovid. Her. I-XV	0.27
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	0.36
Ovid. Met.	0.29
Ven. Fort.	0.19
Ovid eleg. TOT.	0.34

Tab. 2. Distribution of the dactylic realisations in the pentameter of Ovid and Venantius Fortunatus

	I	II	TOT	V	I%	II%	% TOT	R/I/II
Ovid. Her. I-XV	974	515	1489	1192	81.71	43.20	62.46	1.89
Ovid. Erorot.	2196	1084	3280	2763	79.48	39.23	59.36	2.03
Ovid. Fast.	1966	876	2842	2482	79.21	35.29	57.25	2.24
Ovid. Exil.	2779	1423	4202	3672	75.68	38.75	57.22	1.95
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	593	269	862	782	75.83	34.40	55.12	2.20
Ven. Fort.	2494	2138	4632	3606	69.16	59.29	64.23	1.17
Ovid eleg. TOT.	8508	4167	12675	10891	78.12	38.26	58.19	2.04

Tab. 2a. Dactylic realisations in the pentameter (in descending order of dactylic realisations)

I	% I
Ovid. Her. I-XV	81.71
Ovid. Erorot.	79.48
Ovid. Fast.	79.21
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	75.83
Ovid. Exil.	75.68
Ven. Fort.	69.16

II	% II	TOTD	% D
Ven. Fort.	2138	4632	64.23
Ovid. Her. I-XV	515	1489	62.46
Ovid. Erorot.	1084	3280	59.36
Ovid. Exil.	1423	4202	57.22
Ovid. Fast.	876	2842	57.25
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	269	862	55.12

Tab. 3. Short open syllables in the final element of the pentameter

	υ	V	%
Ovid. Her. I-XV	22	1193	1.84
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	13	782	1.66
Ovid. Erorot.	38	2767	1.37
Ovid. Exil.	44	3679	1.20
Ven. Fort.	43	3605	1.19
Ovid. Fast.	24	2484	0.97

Tab. 4. Short open syllables in the final element of the hexameter

		V	%
Ovid. Exil.	328	3679	8.92
Ovid. Met.	1055	11883	8.88
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	64	782	8.18
Ven. Fort.	286	3606	7.93
Ovid. Erot.	215	2767	7.77
Ovid. Her. I-XV	77	1192	6.46
Ovid. Fast.	147	2484	5.92
Ovid eleg. TOT.	831	10904	7.62

Tab. 5. Line-breaks in the third foot of the hexameter

	3	3 ~	3 ~ ~	TOT	% 3	% 3 ~	% 3 ~ ~	TOT		3 ~	3 ~ ~	%
Ovid. Met.	10586	1280	7	11873	89.16	10.78	0.06	100.00	Ovid. Met.	1280	4844	26.42
Ovid. Her. I-XV	1080	109	2	1191	90.68	9.15	0.17	100.00	Ovid. Her. I-XV	109	491	22.20
Ovid. Erot.	2323	240	2	2765	91.25	8.68	0.07	100.00	Ovid. Erot.	240	1143	21.00
Ovid. Fast.	2287	196	1	2484	92.07	7.89	0.04	100.00	Ovid. Fast.	196	947	20.70
Ven. Fort.	3407	172	27	3606	94.48	4.77	0.75	100.00	Ven. Fort.	172	1652	10.41
Ovid. Exil.	3531	145	0	3676	96.06	3.94	0	100.00	Ovid. Exil.	145	1295	11.20
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	756	26	0	782	96.68	3.32	0	100.00	Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	26	277	9.39
Ovid eleg. TOT.	10177	716	5	10898	93.38	6.57	0.05	100.00		716	4153	17.24

Tab. 6. Line-breaks in the fourth foot

	4	4 ~	4 ~ ~	4 ~ ~ ~	TOT	% 4	% 4 ~	% 4 ~ ~	% 4 ~ ~ ~	TOT	
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> XVI-XXI	569	71	83	16	782	72.76	9.08	10.61	5.50	2.05	100.00
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> I-XV	851	112	119	86	1191	71.45	9.40	9.99	7.22	1.93	100.00
Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	2610	317	468	199	3675	71.02	8.63	12.73	5.41	2.20	100.00
Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	1961	212	415	140	2765	70.92	7.67	15.01	5.06	1.34	100.00
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	1742	219	331	168	2484	70.13	8.82	13.33	6.76	0.97	100.00
Ovid. <i>Met.</i>	7680	1223	1775	807	11872	64.69	10.30	14.95	6.80	3.26	100.00
Ven. <i>Fort.</i>	2145	399	624	346	3606	59.48	11.06	17.30	9.60	2.55	100.00
Ovid eleg. TOT.	7733	931	1416	636	10897	70.96	8.54	12.99	5.84	1.66	100.00

Tab. 7. Realisations of the clausula of the hexameter (in decreasing order of non-canonical clausulae)

	CG	CS	GA	O	TOT	%CG	%CS	%GA	%O	TOT	CS/CG
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> XVI-XXI	373	329	64	16	782	47.70	42.07	8.18	2.05	100	0.88
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> I-XV	494	606	70	21	1191	41.48	50.88	5.88	1.76	100	1.23
Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	1680	1611	326	60	3677	45.69	43.81	8.87	1.63	100	0.96
Ven. Fort.	1532	1826	197	52	3607	42.47	50.62	5.46	1.44	100	1.19
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	1205	1071	174	33	2483	48.53	43.13	7.01	1.33	100	0.89
Ovid. <i>Metam.</i>	6067	4739	916	152	11871	51.09	39.91	7.71	1.28	100	0.78
Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	1126	1448	166	26	2766	40.71	52.35	6.00	0.94	100	1.29
Ovid. <i>Eleg.</i> TOT	4878	5065	800	156	10899	44.76	46.47	7.34	1.43	100.00	1.04

CG: *condere genem* CS: *condere sepulcrum* GA: *Gentetia amos* O: Others

Tab. 8. Realisations of the clausula of the pentameter

	└	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	TOT
	└	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	┐	TOT
Ovid. <i>Erot.</i>	0	2766	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.00
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	1	2481	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	100.00
Ovid. <i>Exil.</i>	2	3621	5	32	10	3670	0	0	0	100.00
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> I-XV	0	1194	0	0	0	1194	0	0	0	100.00
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> XVI-XXI	0	779	0	1	2	782	0	0	0	100.00
Ven. Fort.	7	3537	40	21	0	3605	0	0	0	100.00

Tab. 9. Distribution of the non-canonical clausulae of the elegiac hexameter in Ovid and in Venantius Fortunatus

	Q	XS	T	SB	X	XMM	MQ	MM	M	O	TOT
Ovid. Erot.	3	0	0	7	3	0	0	11	0	2	26
Ovid. Fast.	8	2	2	6	1	0	0	12	0	2	33
Ovid. Exil.	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	39	4	7	60
Ovid. Her. I-XV	2	2	1	8	3	0	0	5	0	0	21
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	14	0	0	16
Ven. Fort.	0	0	14	20	1	0	4	13	0	0	52
Ovid. TOT	13	4	3	33	7	0	0	81	4	11	156
	Q	XS	T	SB	X	XMM	MQ	MM	M	O	TOT
Ovid. Erot.	11.54	0.00	0.00	26.92	11.54	0.00	0.00	42.31	0.00	7.69	100.00
Ovid. Fast.	24.24	6.06	6.06	18.18	3.03	0.00	0.00	36.36	0.00	6.06	100.00
Ovid. Exil.	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	65.00	6.67	11.67	100.00
Ovid. Her. I-XV	9.52	9.52	4.76	38.10	14.29	0.00	0.00	23.81	0.00	0.00	100.00
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	0.00	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	87.50	0.00	0.00	100.00
Ven. Fort.	0.00	0.00	26.92	38.46	1.92	0.00	7.69	25.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Ovid. TOT	8.33	2.56	1.92	21.15	4.49	0.00	0.00	51.92	2.56	7.05	100.00

Q: *Incrementum* XS: *Dardanio Anchisae* T: *Quadrupedantum* SB: *si bona norint* X: *Idaeis coparissis, Facilis quod aquarum, Medium secat agmen* XMM: *magni Phryges et quam* MQ: *Di genuerunt* MM: *Corpore qui se, Et tribus et gens, Haeret an haec sit* M: All types with a final single monosyllable A: Others

TAB. 10. Iambic word at close of first hemistich of the pentameter in Ovid and Venantius Fortunatus

	_	V	%	_	_ _	%
Venant. Fort.	769	3606	21.33	769	2138	35.97
Ovid. Exil.	173	3672	4.71	173	1423	12.16
Ovid. Fast.	99	2482	3.99	31	269	11.52
Ovid. Her. XVI-XXI	31	782	3.96	99	876	11.30
Ovid. Erot.	105	2763	3.80	105	1084	9.69
Ovid. Her. I-XV	42	1192	3.52	42	515	8.16
Ovid. Tot.	450	10891	4.13	450	4167	10.80

TAB. 11. Frequency of synalopha in Ovid and Venantius Fortunatus

Hexameter				Pentameter			
	Syn.	V	%		Syn.	V	%
	2254	11874	19.82	Ven. Fort.	277	3605	7.68
Ovid. <i>Met.</i>							
Ven. Fort.	530	3607	14.69	Ovid. Erot.	178	2766	6.44
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> I-XV	165	1191	13.85	Ovid. <i>Her.</i> I-XV	70	1191	5.88
Ovid. Exil.	433	3679	11.77	Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	131	2481	5.28
Ovid. Erot.	313	2766	11.32	Ovid. Exil.	151	3677	4.11
Ovid. <i>Fast.</i>	224	2482	9.02	Ovid. <i>Her.</i> XVI-XXI	29	782	3.71
Ovid. <i>Her.</i> XVI-XXI	71	782	9.08				
Ovid. eleg. TOT.	1206	10900	11.06	Ovid. TOT.	559	10897	5.13

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ANRW = Hildegard Temporini – Wolfgang Haase (hrsg. von), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Berlin – New York 1972-.
- BT = *Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana*.
- CCSL = *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina*, Turnhout 1954-.
- CIL = *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin 1863-.
- CSEL = *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Wien 1866-.
- CUF = Collection des Universités de France.
- CLA = *Codices latini antiquiores. A Palaeographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts prior to the ninth Century*, edited by Elias A. Lowe, Oxford 1956-1972.
- EV = *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, Roma 1984-1991.
- GLK = *Grammatici Latini* ex recensione Henrici Keilii, Lipsiae 1855-1880.
- LIMC = *Lexicon iconographicum Mythologiae classicae*, Zürich – München – Düsseldorf 1981-2009.
- MGH AA = *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Auctores antiquissimi*, Berolini 1877-1919.
- OLD = *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford 1996².
- PCBE = *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, Paris 1982-.
- PIR² = *Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saeculi I, II, III*, editio altera, 1936-.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PL	= Jacques-Paul Migne, <i>Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus</i> , Parisiis 1844-1855.
PLRE	= Arnold H. M. Jones – John R. Martindale – John Morris, <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , Cambridge 1971-1992.
PLS	= <i>Patrologiae Latinae cursus completus, Supplementum</i> , Paris 1958-1974.
RAC	= <i>Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum. Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentum mit der Antiken Welt</i> , Stuttgart 1950-.
RE	= <i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart 1893-.
Roscher	= Wilhelm H. Roscher, <i>Ausführliches Lexicon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie</i> , Leipzig 1884-1937 (repr. Hildesheim 1965-1977).
SCh	= <i>Sources Chrétiennes</i> , Paris 1941-.
SP	= <i>Studia Patristica</i> , Berlin 1956-
ThLL	= <i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> , Lipsiae 1900-.

LIST OF ANCIENT AUTHORS AND WORKS

ACCIIUS

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– iv. 12. 1: p. 156 n. 56.

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- i. 31: p. 147 n. 24;
- x. 43: p. 157 n. 56;
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